

VOL 2
CHAPTERS 7 - 12



BhagavadGita

demystified
by

NITHYANANDA

Bhagavad**Gita** Demystified

*Discourses delivered to Swamis and Ananda Samajis
of the Nithyananda Order all over the world*

Bhagavad**Gita** Vol. II Chapters 7-12



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Dear Reader

Our efforts in compiling these volumes have been to get Paramahansa's message to humanity at the earliest so that the people are continued to be helped tremendously through it as early as possible in their lives. Any errors in this book are due to oversight of the compilation team and will be corrected in the next edition. In the event you do encounter errors, it is a humble request to catch the truth instead of the letter and move on. We will be happy if you bring it to our notice.

- Publishers

TRANSLITERATION AND PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

>	oṁ	home	>	oṁ	Rome
A	a	fun	Ṭ	ṭa	touch
Am	ā	car	R>	ṭha	ant-hill
B	i	pin	S>	ḍa	duck
B [©]	ī	feen	T>	ḍha	godhook
C	u	put	U	ṇa	thunder
D\$	ū	pool	V	ṭa	(close to) think
F\$	r	rig	W	ṭha	(close to) pathetic
F\$	ṛ	(long r)	X	da	(close to) father
b¥	ḷ	*	Y	dha	(close to) breathe <u>hard</u>
E	c	play	Z	na	numb
Eo	ai	high	n	pa	purse
Am	o	over	\\$	pha	sapphire
Am	au	cow	~	ba	but
A\$	aṁ	**	^	bha	abhor
A...	aḥ	***	_	ma	mother
H\$	ka	kind	`	ya	young
I	kha	blockhead	a	ra	run
J	ga	gate	b	la	luck
K	gha	log-hut	d	va	virtue
L>	ṇa	sing	e	śa	shove
M	ca	chunk	f	ṣa	bushel
N>	cha	match	g	sa	sir
O	ja	jug	h	ha	house
P	jha	hedgehog	ī	(Note 1)	(close to) world
Am	ña	bunch	j	kṣa	worksheet
İ	tra	three	k	jña	*
@		unpronounced (a)	@	“	Unpronounced (ā)

Note 1: “” itself is sometimes used.

** Nasalisation of the preceding vowel.

* No English Equivalent.

*** Aspiration of preceding vowel

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Bhagavad Gita: A Background

Bhagavad Gita is a sacred scripture of the *vedic* culture. As with all scriptures, it was knowledge that was transmitted verbally. It was called *śruti* in Sanskrit, meaning something that is heard.

Gita, as Bhagavad Gita is generally called, translates literally from Sanskrit as 'Sacred Song'. Unlike *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads*, which are stand alone expressions, Gita is written into the Hindu epic Mahabharata, called a *purana*, an ancient tale. It is part of a story, so to speak.

As a scripture, Gita is part of the ancient knowledge base of the *vedic* tradition, which is the expression of the experiences of great sages.

Vedas and *Upaniṣads*, the foundation of *śruti* literature, arose from the insight and awareness of these great sages when they went into a no-mind state. These are as old as humanity and the first and truest expressions in the journey of man's search for truth.

Unlike *Vedas*, which were revealed to the great sages, or *Upaniṣads*, which were the teachings of these great sages, Gita is part of a story narrated by Vyasa, one of these great sages. It is narrated as the direct expression of the Divine.

No other epic, or part of an epic, has the special status of Gita. As a consequence of the presence of Gita, the Mahabharata epic itself is considered a sacred Hindu scripture. Gita arose from the super-consciousness of Krishna, the supreme god, and is therefore considered a scripture.

Mahabharata, literally meaning the great Bharata, is a narration about the nation and civilization, which is now known as India. It was then a nation ruled by king Bharata and his descendants.

The story of this epic is about two warring clans, Kauravas and Pandavas, closely related to one another. Dhritarashtra, the blind king of Hastinapura and father of the 100 Kaurava brothers was the brother of Pandu, whose children were the five Pandava princes. It is a tale of strife between cousins.

Since Dhritarashtra was blind, Pandu was made the king of Hastinapura. Pandu was cursed by a sage that he would die if he ever entered into a physical relationship with his wives. He therefore had no children. Vyasa says that all the five Pandava children were born to their mothers Kunti and Madri through the blessing of divine beings. Pandu handed over the kingdom and his children to his blind brother Dhritarashtra and retired to meditate in the forest.

Kunti had received a boon when she was still a young unmarried adolescent, that she could summon any divine power at will to father a child. Before she married, she tested her boon. The Sun god Surya appeared before her. Karna was born to her as a result. In fear of social reprisals, she cast the newborn away in a river. Yudhishtira, Bhima, and Arjuna were born to Kunti after her marriage by invocation of her powers, and the twins Nakula and Sahadeva were born to Madri, the second wife of Pandu.

Yudhishtira was born to Kunti as a result of her being blessed by Yama, the god of death and justice, Bhima by Vayu, the god of wind, and Arjuna by Indra, god of all the divine beings. Nakula and Sahadeva, the youngest Pandava twins, were born to Madri, through the divine Ashwini twins.

Dhritarashtra had a hundred sons through his wife Gandhari. The eldest of these Kaurava princes was Duryodhana. Duryodhana felt no love for his five Pandava cousins. He made many unsuccessful attempts, along with his brother Dussasana, to kill the Pandava brothers. Kunti's eldest son Karna, whom she had cast away at birth, was found and brought up by a chariot driver in the palace, and by a strange twist of fate, joined hands with Duryodhana.

Dhritarashtra gave Yudhishtira one half of the Kuru kingdom on his coming of age, since the Pandava prince was the rightful heir to the throne that his father Pandu had vacated. Yudhishtira ruled from his new capital Indraprastha, along with his brothers Bhima, Arjuna, Nakula and Sahadeva. Arjuna won the hand of princess Draupadi, daughter of the king of Panchala, in a *svayamvara*, a marital contest in which princes fought for the hand of a fair damsel. In fulfilment of their mother Kunti's desire that the brothers share everything equally, Draupadi became the wife of all five Pandava brothers.

Duryodhana persuaded Yudhishtira to join a gambling session, where his cunning uncle Shakuni defeated the Pandava king. Yudhishtira lost all that he owned - his kingdom, his brothers, his wife and himself, to Duryodhana. Dussasana shamed Draupadi in public by trying to disrobe her. The Pandava brothers and Draupadi were forced to go into exile for fourteen years, with the condition that in the last year they should live incognito.

At the end of the fourteen years, the Pandava brothers tried to reclaim their kingdom. In this effort they were helped by Krishna, the king of the Yadava clan, who is considered the eighth divine incarnation of Vishnu. However, Duryodhana refused to yield even a needlepoint of land, and as a result, the Great War, the War of Mahabharata ensued. In this war, various rulers of the entire nation that is modern India aligned with one or the other of these two clans, the Kauravas or the Pandavas.

Krishna offered to join with either of the two clans. He said, 'One of you may have me unarmed. I will not take any part in the battle. The other may have my entire Yadava army.' The first offer was made to Duryodhana, who predictably chose the large and well-armed Yadava army, in preference to the unarmed Krishna. Arjuna joyfully and gratefully chose his friend and mentor Krishna to be his unarmed charioteer!

The armies assembled in the vast field of Kurukshetra, now in the state of Haryana in modern day India. All the kings and princes were related to one another, and were often on opposite sides. Facing the Kaurava army and his friends, relatives and teachers, Arjuna was overcome by remorse and guilt, and wanted to walk away from the battle.

Krishna's dialogue with Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra is the content of Bhagavad Gita. Krishna persuaded Arjuna to take up arms and vanquish his enemies. 'They are already dead,' says Krishna, 'All those who are facing you have been already killed by Me. Go ahead and do what you have to do. That is your duty. Do not worry about the outcome. Leave that to Me.'

Gita is the ultimate practical teaching on the inner science of spirituality. It is not as some scholars incorrectly claim, a promotion of violence. It is about the impermanence of the mind and body, and the need to go beyond the mind, ego and logic.

Being blind, king Dhritarashtra does not participate in the war. His minister Sanjaya uses his powers of clairvoyance to 'see' and relate to king Dhritarashtra the goings on on the battlefield. It is in Sanjaya's voice that we hear Gita, the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna.

All the Kaurava princes as well as all their commanders such as Bhishma, Drona and Karna were killed in battle. The five Pandava brothers survived as winners and became the rulers of the combined kingdom.

This dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna is a dialogue between man and God or *nara* and *Narayana* as they are termed in Sanskrit. Arjuna's questions and doubts are those of each one of us. The answers of the Divine, Krishna, transcend time and space. Krishna's message is as valid today as it was on that fateful battlefield some thousands of years ago.

Nithyananda explains the inner metaphorical meaning of Mahabharata thus:

'The Great War of Mahabharata is the fight between the positive and negative thoughts of the mind, called the *saṁskāras*. The positive thoughts are the Pandava princes and the negative thoughts are the Kaurava princes. Kurukshetra or the battlefield is the body. Arjuna is the individual consciousness and Krishna is the enlightened master.

The various commanders who led the Kaurava army represent the major blocks that the individual consciousness faces in its journey to enlightenment. Bhishma, the grand patriarch of the Kuru clan, represents parental and societal conditioning. Drona, the teacher of both the Kauravas and the Pandavas, represents the conditioning from teachers who provide knowledge including spiritual guidance. Karna represents the restrictive influence of good deeds such as charity and compassion, and finally Duryodhana represents the ego, which is the last to fall.

Parental and societal conditioning has to be overcome by rebelling against conventions. This is why, traditionally, those seeking the path of enlightenment are required to renounce the world as *sanyāsin* and move away from civilization. This conditioning does not die as long as the body lives, but its influence drops.

Drona represents all the knowledge one imbibes and the teachers one encounters, who guide us but are unable to take us through to the ultimate flowering of enlightenment. It is difficult to give them up since one feels grateful to them. This is where the enlightened master steps in and guides us.

Karna is the repository of all good deeds and it is his good deeds that stand in the way of his own enlightenment. Krishna has to take the load of Karna's *puṇya*, his meritorious deeds, before he could be liberated. The enlightened master guides one to drop one's attachment to good deeds arising out of what are perceived to be charitable and compassionate intentions. He also shows us that the quest for and the experience of enlightenment is the ultimate act of compassion that one can offer to the world.

Finally one reaches Duryodhana, one's ego, the most difficult to conquer. One needs the full help of the master here. It is subtle work and even the master's help may not be obvious, since at this point, sometimes the ego makes us disconnect from the master as well.

The Great War was between one hundred and eighty million people - one hundred and ten million on the Kaurava side representing our negative *saṁskāras* (stored memories) and seventy million on the Pandava side representing our positive *saṁskāras* and it lasted eighteen days and nights. The number eighteen has a great mystical significance. It essentially signifies our ten senses that are made up of five *jñānendriya* - the senses of perception like taste, sight, smell, hearing and touch, and five *karmendriya* - the senses initiating action like speech, bodily movements, etc., added to our eight kinds of thoughts like lust, greed, etc. All eighteen need to be dropped for Self-realization!

Mahabharata is not just an epic story. It is not merely the fight between good and evil. It is the dissolution of both positive and negative *saṁskāras* that reside in our body-mind system, which must happen for the ultimate liberation. It is a tale of the process of enlightenment.

Mahabharata is a living legend. Bhagavad Gita is the manual for enlightenment.

Like Arjuna many thousand years ago, you are here in a dialogue with a living enlightened master in this book. This is a tremendous opportunity to resolve all questions and clear all doubts with the master's words.



Introduction

In this series, enlightened master, Paramahansa Nithyananda comments on Bhagavad Gita.

Many hundreds of commentaries on Gita have been written over the years. The earliest commentaries were by the great spiritual masters such as Adi Shankaracharya, Ramanuja and Madhva, some thousand years ago. In recent times, great masters such as Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Ramana Maharshi have spoken from Gita extensively. Many others have written volumes on this great scripture.

Nithyananda's commentary on Bhagavad Gita is not just a literary translation and a simple explanation of that translation. He takes the reader through a world tour while talking about each verse. It is believed that each verse of Gita has seven levels of meaning. What is commonly rendered is the first-level meaning. Here, an enlightened master takes us beyond the common into the uncommon, with equal ease and simplicity.

To read Nithyananda's commentary on Gita is to obtain an insight that is rare. It is not mere reading; it is an experience; it is meditation.

Shankara, the great master and philosopher said:

'A little reading of Gita, a drop of Ganga water to drink, remembering Krishna once in a while, all this will ensure that you have no problems with the god of death.'

Editors of these volumes of Bhagavad Gita have expanded upon the original discourses delivered by Nithyananda through further discussions with Him. For ease of understanding for English speaking readers, and in their academic interest, the original Sanskrit verses and their English translation have been included as an appendix to this book.

This reading is meant to help every individual in daily life as well as in the endeavour to realize the ultimate Truth. It creates every possibility to attain *nityānanda*, eternal bliss!

Bhagavad**Gita**

Understand and Evolve

CHAPTER 7

All living beings are caught in the duality of attachment and aversion. The great Master Krishna explains how to move out of this bondage.



- ◆ *Swamiji*, you said that our natural state is bliss and that we have lost that state through our upbringing. How can we restore the awareness of our original state of bliss and oneness with the Divine?
- ◆ Is the thread that Krishna refers to, the cosmic energy?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, education emphasizes knowledge, whether it is the traditional Eastern or modern Western system. However, education does not seem to lead to happiness as it should. Why?
- ◆ I hear what you say about the caste system, that it is based on *guṇas* or qualities and not on birth, and that all castes are equal, etc. Yet today it does not work that way. There are many other cultures that treat each other better than we do here. Still you say that we are one of the most civilized cultures. I am unable to reconcile the reality with the truth of what you have presented.
- ◆ Many scriptures advise us to look inward. But to be successful in this world we need to look outward, at how things happen around us. How can we succeed by looking inward?
- ◆ When I see your disciples, those who live in the ashram and those who follow you while living outside, I see a calmness that I envy. I hope I too can reach there.
- ◆ Does being wealthy negate Self-realization? Most religions preach that we need to give up all that is material before we can become spiritual.
- ◆ Throughout this chapter and other chapters, Krishna talks about reaching Him for salvation. He suggests many methods. But none seem practical. Is He referring to a mere intellectual understanding of what He says or is there more to it? How does the mere acceptance of the truth that He is supreme and beyond the demigods liberate me?



Understand and Evolve

To begin with, let us see why Krishna has given us this chapter. Again and again Krishna speaks the same truth. Nothing else is spoken, only the same truth. Then what is the need for so many chapters?

People can say that Krishna is repeating Himself. They may ask, 'How many times must He say that the spirit is indestructible, or that all work must be done without expecting returns or that one must surrender to Him to reach salvation?'

People ask me, '*Swamiji*, how many days will it take for us to learn meditation?'

I tell them, 'To learn meditation, two minutes are enough. To learn what meditation is not, you need ten days!'

Krishna knows that Arjuna is just like us. He represents the sum total of humanity. Arjuna is the quintessence of humanity. To explain to a man or woman what needs to be done, and why it is right is not enough. The human mind will find a hundred reasons why ninety-nine other things are just as good. So the master must also tell why the other ninety-nine things are not the straight path, and why we must stick to those things that the master prescribes.

That is exactly what Krishna does in the Bhagavad Gita. Again and again, the great master explains patiently why the ninety-nine other options are not really options at all. He does this to prove that the one option He outlines sinks deeply into Arjuna's consciousness. As a result, this truth also sinks into the consciousness of every individual who reads the Bhagavad Gita.

In life, we learn and do many things that are not meditation. To unlearn all of these, it takes time. When we express the truth logically, our mind always goes to the other end of the logic. So we need to understand the truth from both ends.

There is a beautiful philosophy in India, *nyāya śāstra*, or the scripture of logic. According to this, any statement has two lines of logic. The first line of logic is regular logic; *nyāya* means regular.

For example, if I make the statements, 'All men have one head. Socrates is a man,' we can easily conclude that the third statement will be: Socrates has one head. This is simple logic.

There is another kind of logic, a higher-level logic. For example, let us say the first statement says, 'There are two doors.' The second statement says, 'One door is open.' An average person immediately jumps to the conclusion that the other door is closed. However, in this kind of logic we cannot jump to conclusion based on the first two statements. The second door may also be open. We don't know. The two statements do not provide a specific conclusion. We cannot come to any conclusion unless we see that the second door is closed, or we are told that the second door is closed.

In order that the listener, reader and disciple do not make mistakes in the understanding, the master ensures that we know which door is open and which door is closed. It is not left to assumption on the basis of the disciple's intelligence.

But the master does not explain for that reason alone. When the truth sinks into us, it should sink in without a trace. It should sink in without resistance. However, when something is not fully explained and our mind detects options, such as figuring out which of the two doors is open, it starts on its own trip. It moves away from what is being explained. When this happens, instead of focusing on the substance of what is said, the mind gets constantly distracted and becomes tired. A tired mind makes mistakes.

Usually, in life, we make mistakes when we jump to conclusions using the first kind of logic when we should have made those decisions using the second kind of logic. The moment somebody makes a statement, 'You don't have compassion,' we immediately become defensive and say, 'Do you mean to say I am cruel? You mean I am violent?'

We don't have to jump to such a conclusion. He made a statement, 'You are not compassionate.' We don't have to immediately think, 'You mean I am cruel? You mean I am violent?' When we jump to conclusions, we create trouble not only for ourselves but also for others. Many times we make this mistake.

When we handle our mind without awareness, again and again, we make this mistake. The words that we repeat inside our system create our whole life. The totality of the words we repeat internally to ourselves in our mind is our life. Our life is nothing but words or thoughts in our mind. If our mind jumps to illogical conclusions like this, conclusions that are not straight, naturally we create trouble for ourselves and problems for others. When we are unaware we always jump to these types of conclusions.

Ordinary masters express their philosophy or their experience with the second kind of logic, which is why there is so much misunderstanding. There's a possibility of missing their message. However, Krishna is a *jagat guru* (master of the universe). He is not an ordinary master. He is the master of the whole universe and He knows the minds of all possible types of human beings. He knows the problems of logic.

He is delivering this message in such a way that we cannot jump to conclusions, or assume any statement in the flow of the logic. He makes all the three statements. He is clear. He says, 'There are two doors, the first door is open, the second door is closed.' He makes all three statements, so there is no need for us to assume! He protects us from ourselves.

If we are allowed to assume, if we are allowed to jump to conclusions, we miss the truth. Not only do we miss the truth, we miss the whole message. Here Krishna does not allow us to jump to conclusions. He makes all three statements. What is supposed to be done, what is supposed to be avoided, why it should be done, and why something else should be avoided. He is clear about the whole thing. That is why He repeats the same truth in each chapter from a different level of logic each time. He makes the same statements, but from a different level of logic so that the people who hear it will not miss the message.

In this whole chapter, *Jñāna Vijñāna Yoga*, He speaks about the same message from a different view.



One In A Billion Reaches Me!

7.1 Krishna says,

Arjuna, Listen to Me, you can know Me completely and without doubt by practising yoga in true consciousness of Me,

With your mind attached to Me.

7.2 Let Me explain to you in detail this phenomenal and absolute knowledge along with its realization;

By knowing which, there shall remain nothing further to be known.

7.3 Out of many thousands of men, hardly one endeavors or strives to achieve the perfection of self-realization;

Of those so endeavoring, hardly one achieves the perfection of self-realization, and of those, hardly one knows Me in truth or reaches that state of oneness with Me.

7.4 Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego

All together these eight constitute My separated external energies.

7.5 Besides these external energies, which are inferior in nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine.

This comprises all the embodied souls of all the living entities by which this material world is being utilized or exploited.

Again and again people ask me, '*Swamiji*, why did you choose to speak on the Bhagavad Gita? Why didn't you choose books like Ashtavakra Gita, Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, Brahma Sutra or the *Upaniṣad*? Why did you choose the Gita?'

I tell them that the Gita expresses the truth in totality. Krishna has created keys for all kinds of human beings. For every kind of person, He has given a key. Krishna fulfills every need of every human being.

He says, 'Listen, Arjuna, by practising yoga in full consciousness of Me, with mind attached to Me, you can know Me in full, without doubt.' In this statement, Krishna uses the word 'Me' three times. Having read that, a psychologist will conclude that Krishna is egoistic. According to psychology, if we use the word 'I' or 'Me' three or more times in a statement, we are egoistic. We need treatment.

Anyhow, for a normal man, it sounds egoistic. A person might hate Krishna because he feels Krishna is egoistic.

Again and again, He declares, 'Surrender to Me. I am everything.' We should understand here that He is expressing His glory. For a normal man, it may sound egoistic. The person who hates Krishna thinking He is egoistic, misses the truth or spirit expressed by the Gita. In the same way, a person who loves Krishna gets caught in His form and misses the juice of the Gita!

Please be very clear, whenever people are caught in the form, when they worship the form, they slowly start saying, 'Gita is great. Krishna is God. He can express all these things, but surely it is not for us. It is not practical.' In this way, they slowly create a distance between themselves and Krishna. They worship the Gita instead of practising it.

If we have a pot full of milk and we worship it but never drink it, will we get the benefit of the milk? Understand, unless we drink the milk, we will never get the benefit of the milk.

Unless we imbibe Krishna, we cannot get the benefit of the Gita. That is why I always tell people, Jews have avoided Christ by crucifying Him, by putting Him on the cross, and Hindus have avoided Krishna by worshipping him and putting Him on the wall. Please be very clear, hanging on the cross and hanging on the wall are one and the same. When we don't imbibe Krishna's teachings in our lives, when we don't work towards experiencing Krishna, worshipping Krishna is nothing but crucifixion. It's a cunning method of escaping from the truth.

The people who crucified Christ at least carry the guilt that they made a mistake, but these people who hang Krishna on the wall don't even carry that guilt.

In a nice and cunning way they have escaped from Krishna, that's all. Worshipping without following or worshipping without imbibing is the worst form of crucifixion.

People who hate Krishna think He is egoistic. And people who love Krishna are caught in His form and think they should surrender to the personality called Krishna who came down in human form. Only a person who experiences Krishna realizes the Gita.

The people who hate Krishna and the people who love Krishna, both miss the Gita. If we are caught in the form of Krishna, we become fanatics. I have seen many people who get caught in the form and become fanatics.

Anyhow, the gist of this chapter is about how human beings approach the Divine, why they approach the Divine, and at what level they approach the Divine.

There is a beautiful saying in the Bible, 'God created man in his own mold.' But I tell you, 'Man created God in his own mold.' We approach the Divine in the way we want It. According to our maturity, we approach the Divine.

At what level do we approach the Divine? How do we generally worship? What do we receive in return? How do we grow in maturity? Krishna gives the answers to these questions in this chapter. Here He says, 'Out of many thousands among men, *one* may endeavor for perfection, and out of those who have achieved perfection, hardly *one* knows Me in truth.'

Beautiful! Here He says, 'out of thousands'. He should say 'out of billions'. He should change the statement. In those days, the population must have been less, which is why He makes the statement 'out of thousands'. Now we should say, 'Out of billions, *one* may endeavor for perfection.'

*manuṣyāṇāṃ sahasreṣu kaścid yatati siddhaye ।
yatatām api siddhānāṃ kaścin mām vetti tattvataḥ ॥ 7.3*

Among millions of men, one man may endeavor for perfection, and out of those who achieve perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth. Out of millions, there are only a few; out of billions there are even fewer who enter into the path of seeking. Out of the few, only one or two achieve the ultimate experience.

There are millions of people out there, but only a few hundred are present today to listen to this Gita discourse. And out of these few hundred, only a few will hear it as it is expressed. We may sit here. We may even hear, but don't think we actually listen. Never think that we really listen.

I request people to never repeat what I have said to someone else. If you do repeat it, then please don't say, '*Swamiji* told me these things.' Be very clear, you heard those things. Tell them, 'I heard these things.' Never say, '*Swamiji* said'. Many times we miss much of what is said. Modern scientists say that we observe hardly two percent of the things that happen around us. If a hundred things happen around us, we observe only two! We imbibe only two percent of what goes on around us.

It is as if you have a hundred-page storybook, and somehow you lose the whole book except for two random pages. All the other ninety-eight pages are lost. If you try to reconstruct the whole novel with only those two pages, how true will it be to the original? In the same way, you remember hardly two percent of what I say. With that two percent, if you try to reconstruct this whole discourse, naturally it will be your discourse, not mine. Please be very clear, you might sit here, however, it doesn't mean that you listen. If you want to tell people what I spoke, please always say, 'I heard Nithyananda say this.' Never say, 'Nithyananda said...'

Because of your assumptions, because you jump to conclusions, and because of your inner chatter, you miss what is actually being said.

The master is always ready to share his experiences, always ready to teach. That is his mission in life. The infinite compassion that fills an enlightened being is forever bursting to be let out to share, to teach, to guide. That is why Krishna says that He is now ready to explain.

The question is whether or not Arjuna is ready to listen. Even if Arjuna was ready to listen and he became enlightened, are we ready to listen today, now?

Why does Krishna say that a few even try, and of those who try, very few succeed? Remember that He is talking about Self-realization, about understanding who we are. Why is it so difficult even to try?

We do not want to try because we are afraid. We are restless in any form of silence. If I am silent for a few minutes after I sit down before an audience, the entire audience becomes restless; they start fidgeting.

Why do we find it difficult to meditate? After all, all we do in meditation is close our eyes and remain silent. Why is it difficult? We give appointments to everyone else every day of our lives, willingly and unwillingly. Why is it so difficult to give half an hour a day to ourselves?

Why would we rather watch television, knowing fully well that nothing of value will come from it? Why would we rather read the same old newspaper again and again? Understand, all these are because we are afraid of being with ourselves.

Why are we afraid of being with ourselves? What is it that we are afraid of? We must ask and answer these questions ourselves.

If Self-realization means going back to where we came from, and where we came from is a state of bliss and divinity, then why are we afraid to be with ourselves?

The truth is that we have forgotten where we came from. Nothing in the way we are brought up and 'educated' tells us that we come from bliss and we can regain that bliss. Society has its own self-interest in not letting us be aware of this truth. Whether in the form of religion, government or family structure, the truth of our bliss is obscured. If we realize how easy it is to be blissful and return to our original state, no one can control us. That is what liberation means. We are free. But society operates on the principle of control. Religion operates on the principle of control. So do political and family structures.

The moment we realize who we are and we are liberated, these institutions cannot make us do what they want us to do. So they give us carrots and they wield the stick. They tell us that we will go to hell if we do wrong and we can go to heaven if we do whatever they tell us is right. They give us recipes in the form of laws.

From childhood we are conditioned to avoid looking too deeply into ourselves because if we do, we may find the truth and be liberated. Then there will be no need for our churches and temples, priests and politicians. They make us afraid that there will be anarchy if we do not obey their directives.

Why would there be anarchy if we realize the truth about ourselves? Why would there be anarchy if we realize we are God? It is because we will be filled with awareness and whatever we do in that state of awareness will be right. Also, such awareness will remove all fear and greed in us. We will no longer need external inducements to make us happy. No one and nothing can control us. We will be liberated. That is a great threat to society.

Most of society doesn't know these deeper truths and even the ones who know it conveniently avoid it because it is too much of truth for practicality. This is how society puts generation after generation of people in deep illusion. Our governments, temples, society, friends and even our family are very weary of the

truth in its purest form. So they keep us under illusion. That is most convenient to them.

Adi Shankaracharya, the great Indian saint says beautifully in the verses of his song Bhaja Govindam, *kā te kāntā, kaste putrah...* meaning, 'Where is your wife, where are your children when you finally depart?' You leave alone. You came alone and you will leave alone. Even your wife, who loved you dearly, is afraid of you once your body becomes cold.

All love as we know it, is conditional. The only true love is that of the Divine and that of the master. Such love comes out of infinite compassion. It expects nothing in return. What can we offer God and our master?

So if we need to follow the truth, we must look after ourselves. We must be selfish. We need to be selfish to enter into this path of Self-realization. However it is not a selfishness born out of the usual material nature. It is selfishness born out of the desperate need to be *selfless*. When we reach our center or our core, we become one with humanity. Then there are no differences among us.

That is why even our spouses will be unhappy if we realize ourselves, because they cannot possess us any more. At that point they must share us with humanity. But they won't understand that the love of Self-realization is infinite that there is no reduction in sharing, there is only growth in sharing.

The path to Self-realization is the path of aloneness. It is not a lonely path; it is an 'alone' path. When we are alone, we are not lonely. We are all in one; that is what being alone means. From being fragmented, we become whole. From being islands, we become the universe.

This is the knowledge that Krishna offers humanity. Out of His deep compassion He says, 'Please listen to Me and realize your Self and be liberated.' One in a million may heed His words and start on this path.

He then says that only one in a million who start on this path will eventually find his own Self, and thus find Me. Is the path so difficult?

No, it is not. Why then does it seem so difficult? We find the external world so attractive that we rarely stay on course in our internal voyage of self-discovery. It is always easier to blame other people and remain where we are than to step on the path of change. It is easier to eat like a glutton and swallow multi-colored pills than to exercise self-control in eating and exercise.

Buddha compares our mind to a monkey, always jumping from point to point. This is where we differ from animals. Animals and plants also have intelligence and emotions. Scientific experiments have established that very well. However they do not have monkey minds, even monkeys don't!

Animals and other species work with Nature. They eat when they are hungry; they sleep when they are tired. That is why they do not need refrigerators and alarm clocks! Human beings, on the other hand, have a powerful tool with which they can either redeem themselves or destroy themselves. And invariably, they work against Nature. That is why they need alarm clocks and other things.

Throughout the Gita, Krishna talks about how to control the mind. He gives specific instructions on what to do and what not to do. All we need to do is to follow the guidance of this universal master. Without any doubt, surely we can then become that one in a thousand or one in a million. But to follow Him, we need to understand Him.

In these verses Krishna explains who He is. Krishna explicitly separates Himself from His manifested energies in these verses.

What we perceive as manifested energies - the five natural elements that are earth, water, fire, air and ether, and the three inner elements of mind, intelligence and ego - are His energies no doubt, yet they are not Him.

Puruṣa and *prakṛti* are considered the operative principles of the universe in the Hindu philosophical systems of Sankhya and Vedanta. *Puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are unmanifest energy sources, *puruṣa* being inactive and *prakṛti* capable of being active, so to speak. Everything else arises from these two elements when they operate together.

Prakṛti gives rise to the cosmic and individual intelligence and the five natural elements. The Taittreya Upanishad explains that the cosmic energy gave rise to etheric energy or the energy of space, *ākāśa*, which pervades the universe. This is the largest quantum of energy that pervades the universe, and the subtlest. From etheric energy the energy of air arises. It is this energy of air, or *vāyu*, that sustains us in our body-mind system as the carrier of *pranic* or life energy.

From the energy of air arises the energy of fire, *agni*. In ancient times, being the first visible form of energy, fire was celebrated as the most powerful deity. Many salutations in the Rig Veda, the first of the Hindu scriptures, are addressed to the

fire. Almost all *vedic* rituals are performed for the fire god. This is also true of many ancient cultures. Fire provided light and heat, essential for our sustenance and day-to-day living.

Āpas, the energy of water, arose from the energy of fire. *Pr̥thvī*, the energy of earth arose from the energy of water. The Taittreya Upanishad goes on to say that it is from the earth energy that plants, herbs and food were created, from which came human beings.

Within the human being is the intelligence that is a hologram of the cosmic intelligence. The energy cycle is now complete.

This energy tree, from its subtlest beginning to the grossest manifestation, is also the story of creation. Ten thousand years ago, sages of our ancient *vedic* culture propounded these truths with no external devices to aid them. They intuited them, as they looked inward rather than outward.

Our *vedic* rituals were full of meaning. Today they are condemned as old fashioned and meaningless activities because we lost the link to their meaning. Spirituality is nothing but spirit infused into rituals.

The fire rituals are methods to transfer the energy from the ether to earth, from the cosmos to the individual. Through the power of chants, sound energy that activates the etheric energy is transferred through air to the fire in the sacrificial pit. The water stored in pots around the fire pit collects this energy. The energized water is then poured onto the earth, a deity or individuals to transfer this energy to them.

Of the energies in the five natural elements, we can directly access the energies of earth, water, fire and air. We eat, drink, warm ourselves and breathe with these energies. However, we cannot directly access the etheric energy. Our ego, our mind, becomes a barrier to our absorption of this energy.

Meditation is the key to imbibe the etheric energy of the cosmos, the largest and subtlest energy source. *Vedic* fire rituals are mass meditation processes: meditation for dummies! We just need to be there to absorb the energy, even if we do not have the capacity to meditate.

The cosmic intelligence is reflected in the human as the mind. The mind in turn uses the senses to access the external world. Each of the senses - sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch - are related to the natural elements.

Ether is linked to sound or the ears; air is linked to touch and the skin; fire is linked to color and form, and so to sight and the eyes; water is linked to taste and the tongue; earth is linked to smell or the nose.

The mind receives information through the senses of perception, and executes decisions through the senses of action. When the senses are denied access to the external world, which is their sustenance, the mind shuts down. Thoughts cease!

Ego is a creation of the mind. Ego is also an illusion. It is an illusion because it is not permanent; it is not the truth. True realization of the Self is achieved when the ego is shed and when the mind stops. Then, inner intelligence awakens to the cosmic intelligence.

Here, Krishna refers to ego as *ahankāra*. *Ahankāra* is what we direct outwards. It is our identity that we project outwards. This is always in excess of what we think of as ourselves, as we seek to create an impression on others, as we seek attention from others. There is another side to our ego, called *mamakāra*, which we project inwards; what we think of as us inside us. This *mamakāra* is always lower than what we think ourselves to be. Internally we have a lower opinion of ourselves.

The perpetual gap between this outer projection and inner projection creates stress, suffering and dis-ease within us.

When we realize our Self, we realize that we are divine and nothing less. Anything that we think about ourselves that is lower than this is low self-esteem. What Krishna says is true for all of us. We are above the energies that constitute us. We too are the energy that constitutes our body-mind system.

All that we lack is the awareness of this truth. Our natural state *is* to know ourselves. Once we realize the truth that we are God, there is no difference between Krishna and us. We are enlightened. That is what Krishna came to prove. He has no need to prove that He is God. He doesn't care if we know it or not. His mission was to enlighten Arjuna, and through Arjuna, the rest of humanity. His mission is to prove to us that we too are God!

Q: Swamiji, you said that our natural state is bliss and that we have lost that state through our upbringing. How can we restore the awareness of our original state of bliss and oneness with the Divine?

While growing up, what we have lost is the innocence and curiosity of the child, and the ability to be nonjudgmental and carefree. Along with that we have lost our natural state of being in bliss.

Fortunately, we have not lost everything. Our inner divinity is not lost and cannot be lost. Hence it does not have to be found or restored.

We have only forgotten, so it is only a question of remembrance. It is in the deepest core of our being: call it truth, God, bliss, beauty. All these things indicate the same phenomenon. There is something eternal in our beings, something immortal and something divine. We know it deep inside. That is why no matter how much we seem to enjoy all the material pleasures, a gnawing feeling of emptiness, a feeling that this is not all there is to life, nags us.

All we need to do is go deep, dive deep into our being, and see. Realize and recognize. Hence the journey is not really a journey. We are not to go anywhere. We need to just see, that's all.

Money does not help in this journey. Power and prestige are of no help either. From the beginning, we must be aware that love is the only treasure to be sought.

We continuously search for the home to go to. We miss something. We are not certain what it is, yet the feeling is there within everyone that something is missing. And we go on accumulating things - money, power and prestige - hoping that by gaining these things the haunting feeling will disappear. We hope that the gap will be filled, and that the emptiness will not be there anymore. However, nothing from the outside fills the gap because money cannot enter our being, neither can power or prestige.

Nothing from the outside is of any help. Hence the more we have, the more we are haunted by an empty feeling.

There seems to be a paradox. The richer a society is, the more searching there is for a home, the more searching there is for roots. It is not an accident that only affluent societies become religious. It is caused by what I call the 'depression of success.' We have everything that we have sought and yet we are unhappy. We do not know why we sought what we sought. That is why we become more religious.

Spirituality need not be divorced from materialism. It need not conflict with material possessions. The poor people search for fulfillment through money, a good home, family, this and that. By the time they have arranged for these things, they suddenly become aware that life is gone and they are where they have always been,

with a feeling of missing something. Then a great frustration sets in. They have missed life. Nothing from the outside fulfils the search.

Nothing will fulfil because it is in the inner space that we have to learn to live life. It is here that we find God. And unless we find God, we will not be fulfilled.

People are unaccustomed to bliss. To be blissful is strange. People are well acquainted with misery. They live in it and wallow in it. Whenever we meet someone blissful we are uncomfortable. We think that this person must have gone mad because the regular way is to be worried about something or the other. Most people are miserable. Only once in a while do we see a person enjoying himself by himself. Once in a rare while there is a Buddha, or a Krishna. But even in their case, the rest of the world looks at them as if they are mad. Buddha was thought to be a madman in his own day for the simple reason that he was so blissful.

People understand misery since that is what they are used to. That is their language. Bliss is not their language. Most people experience temporary happiness. Their happiness is superficial. It is a kind of a deception. They deceive others and deceive themselves.

Jesus Christ calls the life of bliss the kingdom of God. It is within us. No army is needed; we are not expected to conquer anybody. It is a strange victory. It happens at the innermost core of our being; no army, no enemy and no arms. And suddenly one is victorious! One has conquered life because one has known life. To know is to conquer.

When we know ourselves we reach our natural state that has always been within us. We experience bliss - *nityānanda*.



I Am The Thread!

7.6 Know for certain that everything living is manifested by these two energies of Mine.

I am the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of them.

7.7 O conqueror of wealth [Arjuna], there is no truth superior to Me.

Everything hangs upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

7.8 O son of Kunti [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the radiance of the sun and the moon, the sacred syllable Om in the vedic mantras.

I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

7.9 I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire.

I am the life of all living beings, and I am the penance of all ascetics.

‘I am the thread,’ He says. ‘I am the thread, the *sūtra*, the technique on which all Existence is strung.’

What a beautiful analogy! That is why He is the *sūtradhāra*, the controller and director of the cosmic play! Nothing moves, nothing can move without Him. Nothing can be created, sustained or destroyed in the absence of His energy.

People often ask me why I call myself Swami. They question me as to why I dress up in these ways and allow myself to be photographed. I tell them that I do not even identify with this body. This skin itself is alien to me. There is no difference between this skin and other coverings? So how does it matter?

I look at myself the way you look at me, as a witness! Or the way you and I look at an idol. If this body is dressed well, I feel good - the same way you feel good seeing it dressed up, that's all. I am just a witness.

For you, God is a mere concept; He is just an idea. It is another play of your mind. You think of God and attribute various concepts to Him. You talk about Him in the same manner in which you would talk about a friend or relative, perhaps more glowingly or less glowingly depending on your inclination at that point in time.

To you, your identity and your identification with your body-mind is real. Without this identity you are lost. If someone does not recognize you, you suffer. The moment someone praises you, you are in the seventh heaven. Your identity is your reality. 'I' is what makes you alive.

To me, God is reality. I live with God every moment. The body, mind and the body-mind identification does not exist for me. It is only a concept! Therefore, when I refer to myself, I refer to that body-mind the same way that you refer to it. I too call it Swami or whatever!

I cannot move a finger without permission from Existence, from that *Parabrahma* Krishna, that cosmic Krishna. You may think, 'This sounds nonsensical. He says he is enlightened and then he says there is nothing that he can do; he can do only as Existence dictates.'

Nonsense or not, this is the truth. Whether you understand it or not, whether you accept it or not, this is the truth. What makes me move, talk, see and do all that you do is only what the universe dictates.

My disciples know that when someone with deep faith in me comes with a problem, I say, 'I'll take care.' If it is someone who is yet to develop that deep faith, I say that I shall meditate or pray to Anandeshwara for them! They go away happy to hear that.

When I say, 'I shall take care,' there is nothing special that I do. I just pass it on to Existence. It is for Her to take care. Because I have that immense faith in Her, She always obliges! Things happen.

People know that the rosary that they wear, the string of *rudrākṣa* beads or red sandalwood beads, is not a mere rosary. It is their hotline to connect to Existence. There have been so many people who share their experiences with the rosary. When someone is desperately in need of help of some sort, they simply hold onto the rosary and pray. The results are always instantaneous.

All this has nothing to do with me although they hold onto the rosary thinking of me. It has to do with Existence. The moment I feel that it is a result of my penance, it will stop happening! There is nothing that 'I' can do. There is nothing that this energy can do.

That is what Krishna talks about here. The great master says, I am not what you see. I am not the energy that is manifested. It is not this six-foot Krishna with a flute and peacock feather that makes things happen. It is the formless energy beyond Vasudeva Krishna (Krishna, the mortal being, the son of Vasudeva). It is *Parabrahma* Krishna (Krishna, the cosmic energy).

When we see a necklace or garland, do we notice the thread? If it is a pearl or diamond necklace we may get it threaded in gold, but still we rarely notice the thread. We delight over the pearls or diamonds, yet never think about the thread that holds them together, unless it snaps and all the pearls and diamonds spill on the floor. Then, we blame the thread!

Krishna says, He is the unseen thread without which no rosary can exist. He says He is the unseen essence without which there can be no substance. He says He is the unseen energy without which there can be no universe.

Have you ever wondered how this universe operates? There are billions of planets like ours, millions of solar systems, thousands of galaxies and many universes. There is nothing that anyone can see that is controlling this universe. We need traffic lights and policemen to control traffic on our roads. In the Milky Way there are no policemen to control the movements of planets and stars. Yet they move unerringly!

Can you imagine the intelligence that controls multiple universes? How is there such discipline and order in that seeming chaos that no one is in charge of? No one is responsible, or is someone?

On the other hand, within this small body of ours we try to control everything. We control the food we eat, how much we exercise, how much we play, etc. Yet we can predict nothing about it. Despite all the order that we impose, there is chaos sometimes!

Control does not bring about order; it never can. Freedom brings about order. Chaos is freedom. Chaos is choice. The ultimate chaos is the cosmic Krishna; He is also the ultimate order too.

Krishna illustrates what He said earlier with specific examples.

The beauty of Krishna's teaching in the Bhagavad Gita is the depth to which He goes to make everything crystal clear to Arjuna. He makes no assumptions, takes

nothing for granted. It is as if Arjuna is a child and He is the parent or teacher. For the Lord of the universe to take the trouble to ensure complete understanding shows the depth of His compassion.

I explained earlier that in the five natural elements, the essence of ether is sound, of air is touch, of fire is form and heat, of water is taste and of earth is smell. Krishna explains that He is the essential quality in each of these elements; also that He is the *praṇava mantra* - primordial sound - 'Om' and the radiance of the Sun and Moon.

Life, any form of life in this and any other planet, cannot exist without this energy of cosmic Krishna. But living within this energy field we lose sight of this energy. We become energy-unconscious. Kabir, the mystic poet said hauntingly, we are like fish that are immersed in life-giving water yet cry out saying, 'We are thirsty.' Kabir advises: Fool, become aware! You cannot be a fish in water and be thirsty!

This is an incident from Ramakrishna's life.

Ramakrishna asks his disciple Vivekananda, 'Narendra (his secular name), what would you do if you were a fly and you sat on the edge of a pool of divine nectar, *amṛt*?'

Without hesitation Vivekananda responds, 'I shall sip from it, of course.'

Ramakrishna says, 'Fool, you should fall into that pool and drown! How can you fear drowning in life-giving nectar?'

We are afraid, always afraid. We have no trust in ourselves and therefore no trust in Existence.

If God were to come in front of us in any form other than what we recognize as Him, we would ask for His identification card! Our intelligence is limited to visualizing Krishna in His yellow dress with His flute and a peacock feather stuck in His hair. If Krishna comes covered in ash, with a snake around His neck, the Krishna follower will throw stones at Him saying, 'That is Shiva. I do not worship Shiva.' There are people who claim to have imbibed the Gita, understood every word the Lord says, and yet have questioned me as to how I can worship Shiva in the ashram when I say Krishna is the ultimate!

It is for these people that Krishna goes into such depths to explain that He is everything and above everything. He is the Creator - Brahma, the Sustainer - Vishnu and the Rejuvenator - Shiva. He is not either/or; He is all and above all.

Q: Is the thread that Krishna refers to, the cosmic energy?

In a metaphorical sense, yes, absolutely.

Strangely or perhaps not so strangely, in the recent developments in atomic or quantum physics, there is this concept of string theory. They say that the ultimate expression of subatomic particles, the minutest of the minute particles, is in the form of a string. No longer do they say that these particles are atoms or waves, but strings. It is a string constantly in motion. It does not have any fixed location at any given time. There is only a set of possibilities. However these possibilities are infinite. The string is the connection of all those infinite possibilities. Some call it the Tenth Dimension.

They do not know that there are a few more dimensions!

That is what Krishna is. He is a set of possibilities. He is a set of infinite possibilities. What the scientists say about subatomic particles is what ultimately applies to the cosmic energy, because we now know that energy and matter are the same, in time as well as in space. When the frequency is within our range of sensory or visual perception, we see it as matter. When it goes above or below this range, we sense it as energy; that is all.

When Krishna brings Himself to the level of Arjuna's visual frequency, Arjuna sees Him as his dear friend and mentor. When Krishna goes into His cosmic form, Arjuna needs the third-eye perception to 'see' Krishna's energy.

The thread is always there. Without the thread, there can be no coherent matter. Whether the thread is visible or not depends on one's level of perception. A *yogi*, a truly evolved being, is constantly aware of that thread. The *yogi* constantly meditates on that thread. To such a person, only the thread exists. What exists around the thread, what the thread links together, is of no consequence to him.

Once we catch the thread, nothing else matters. Sometimes I tell the disciples, 'Ok, now you have caught the thread.' It is not a casual comment. It means that they have truly grasped the energy behind a particular statement. It means that they have experienced the truth of that statement. The rest are mere words that mean nothing.

One who controls the thread, the *sūtra*, is the *sūtradhāra*, the controller. Krishna is the ultimate *sūtradhāra*. He is truly the one who controls everything in this universe.



I Am Eternal

7.10 O son of Pritha, I am the eternal source of all creatures, the intelligence of the intelligent, and the brilliance of all those who are brilliant.

7.11 I am the strength of the strong, and I am the procreative energy in living beings, devoid of lust and in accordance with religious principles, O lord of Bharata.

7.12 All states of being - be they of goodness, passion or ignorance - emanate from Me.

I am independent of them but they are dependent on Me.

7.13 The whole world is deluded by the three modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), and thus does not know Me.

I am above the modes and unchangeable.

7.14 My divine energy, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome.

But those who surrender unto Me can cross beyond it with ease.

7.15 Those miscreants who are foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by Māyā (that which is not real), and who have taken shelter in demonic nature, do not surrender unto Me.

‘I am the procreative energy,’ says the Lord. ‘I am the seed of all living beings.’ He makes no excuses, no apologies.

He says, 'I am that procreative energy but without the fantasies of lust.' How can one be a Creator, if one cannot procreate?

Many of our great sages in the past, the *ṛṣi* and *mahaṛṣis*, such as Vashishta and Vyasa were *grhastas*, householders, who were family men with wives and children. Yet they were realized souls, enlightened. Other than Hanuman and Ganesha all our deities are married! Krishna is reputed to have had 16,008 wives!

How can the life form continue without procreation, without the sex act? Not everyone can have a virgin birth.

The desire for celibacy must happen before puberty. The first spiritual experience must happen before adolescence, so that the life-giving sex energy moves upwards as transcendental spiritual energy rather than descend as sexual and procreative energy. People who have this spiritual awakening because of their *prārabdha karma* (desires one is born with) are the *Paramahamsas*. That is their nature. Celibacy happens to them naturally.

To force celibacy after adolescence is difficult. It can be done but must be done with great caution and under supervision. Otherwise the so-called renunciate monk, the *sanyāsi*, will pretend to follow *brahmacarya*, celibacy. Inside he will be filled with fantasies, ready to explode.

I have often explained that the word *brahmacarya* does not mean celibacy. It means 'moving in reality'. It is a very different connotation, if you study the meaning.

It is said that once Krishna was crossing the river Yamuna with a group of *gopīs*, women devotees. The river was in spate. Krishna said to Yamuna, 'If it is true that I am a *brahmacāri*, part and let me walk across.' The river parted and Krishna walked to the other bank.

A *sanyāsi* who watched this was dumbstruck. 'Krishna, a *brahmacāri*? He walks with these women who are His lovers, and He says He is a *brahmacāri* and the river parts for Him! How can this be?'

That is what Krishna explains here, 'I am the procreative energy, but without lust, without attachment and without fantasy. I am the ultimate reality!'

Fantasies are the root cause of our problems. With each fantasy coming true, more fantasies arise. We can never be in reality. To be in reality one must be in the present moment. When you are in the present moment you are Krishna.

When we hanker after the past and speculate about the future, we slip into fantasies. We are no longer within the boundaries of our body. Our mind has moved away from our body into another world, the world of fantasy. This way of living will lead only to suffering. All you need to do to be blissful is, renounce your fantasies. You do not need to renounce what material things you have with you.

Enjoy your wealth, enjoy your work, enjoy your spouse and children. You have earned what you have. Enjoy what is your due. Just stop fantasizing about what you do not have. Stop running after more acquisitions; stop and take time to enjoy what you have acquired.

Move into the present, here and now, into reality, and you will be a *brahmacārī*!

Krishna talks about the *guṇas*, the natural attributes, in these verses. Later on He devotes a chapter to this subject.

Prakṛti, the energy that manifests in the universe, has three elements called *guṇas*. When *prakṛti* is in equilibrium, it is pure potential energy. When it is disturbed, the *guṇas* come into operation. Like building blocks, they combine in many ways and create, sustain and destroy.

Rarely is only a single element or *guṇa* present in a person. It is almost always a mixture. The three *guṇas* that Krishna refers to are *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, commonly translated as goodness or calmness, passion or aggression and ignorance or inaction.

The interplay of these *guṇas* creates the functioning of the mind and through the operation of the mind, activity. *Guṇa* does not refer to the state a person is in. *Guṇa* causes that state to happen. *Satva* by itself is not goodness or calmness. It is the building block that leads to calmness.

No living being influenced by the mind is beyond the influence of the *guṇas*. When one transcends the *guṇas*, as Krishna says about Himself, one becomes a *triguṇa rahita*, one who has transcended the three *guṇas*. Such a person is no longer influenced by the mind and its actions.

I have said this elsewhere. Even an incarnation, an enlightened energy being reborn into this planet on a mission, needs to initially be born with some *guṇa* infused into that being. It is like this: We cannot make jewelry out of pure gold. We must alloy it with copper.

In the same way, even an energy source that has transcended the three *guṇas* needs to have some *satva guṇa* infused in it to be born into this planet. The same is

true of Krishna. As Vasudeva Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, He has some *guṇa* at play in Him.

Remember that Bhagavad Gita is rendered by *Parabrahma* Krishna, the cosmic Krishna, and not by Vasudeva Krishna. So He boldly says, I am beyond the *guṇas*. He says, I am the *parama purusha*, the supreme being, who sets *prakriti* into play, and I am beyond its influence. Krishna is the creator of Nature, which is even beyond *prakriti*, and is therefore beyond the plays of Nature.

We can see the interplay of the *guṇas* in people as they move through this material world. People are generally more in a state of *rajas* - aggressiveness with passion, with various proportions of *satva* and *tamas*. *Rajas* is needed to create, to make things happen, and is the predominant *guṇa* of action.

Especially when you move into an ashram environment, committed to a life of renunciation and detachment, many fall into a deep state of *tamas*, inaction. It is not a state of ignorance, but one of inaction where all your suppressed opposition to your earlier life of meaningless activity surfaces and forces you into sheer inactivity.

You may sleep long hours, far more than normal, disinclined to do anything. However, this is a passing phase. All these suppressions surface and dissolve. Let them. You then move into *satva*. To many, it is surprising that one falls into *tamas* before moving into *satva*, yet it happens and it is a reaction to one's earlier lifestyle.

On the other hand, a person steeped in *tamas* is the person Krishna refers to as one who does not surrender to Him. Such a person is in deep darkness and ignorance. He is unaware of his potential. He is no better than an animal. In fact, an animal is better because it knows how to live in Nature, with Nature. Besides, an animal has no fantasies.

Unfortunately, a human being can distort his perceptions to such a point that he can deny his rightful nature. *Māyā*, illusion, is also the interplay of the *guṇas*. In fact, it is a basic interplay born out of the *guṇas*. *Māyā* is virtual reality and a collection of our fantasies. Just as darkness needs light to destroy it, we need awareness to destroy *māyā*. Otherwise *māyā* destroys us.

In Bhagavatam (the Hindu epic that describes Lord Vishnu's various incarnations, and especially His incarnation as Krishna), there is this story.

Narada is the greatest devotee of Vishnu. He forever sings His praise and has nothing else on his mind. Over time Narada became conceited about being the most celebrated devotee. This happens to all devotees at some point in time.

As a true master, Vishnu took action. He called Narada and asked him to fetch a pot of water. Narada rushed out. Suddenly he was in front of a house asking for water. A beautiful maiden came out with water and Narada fell instantaneously in love with her. He married this girl and they raised children together.

One day there was a great storm. The house and the entire surroundings were flooded. The rushing water carried Narada and his family away. Soon they were separated and his family died. Narada wailed and screamed for help.

Suddenly he heard a voice, 'Narada, where is my water? What happened to you?'

Narada awoke, as if from a great sleep, and saw Vishnu smiling at him. He said, 'Even my greatest devotee is not immune to *māyā*!'

As long as the mind is active, no one is immune to *māyā*.

Q: Swamiji, education emphasizes knowledge, whether it is the traditional Eastern or modern Western system. However, education does not seem to lead to happiness as it should. Why?

In the traditional *gurukul* system of education of the *vedic* culture, education was different from what it is today. It was not a commercial operation. It was a spiritual journey. The master was not merely a teacher imparting book-knowledge. He was a spiritual guide who set himself as an example of how to live life.

We have degraded our educational system, even in India. British colonizers destroyed the *gurukul* system because that was the only way to rule the people - by removing the tool that led to awareness. They replaced it with logical, scientific 'education' that has captivated our intellectuals today.

Logic can never help with happiness, if happiness is to be a permanent experience. Logic comes from the mind and the mind is influenced by the senses. Spirituality is not an intangible concept. Spirituality is the total well-being of mind, body and spirit. Being controlled by the mind cannot lead to happiness. Transcending the mind leads to happiness. Transcending the senses leads to happiness. To transcend the mind and senses, one must give up logic.

Spirituality is about wisdom, whereas knowledge is about logic. Wisdom is rare but knowledge is cheap. Knowledge is available everywhere. We gather it from books, from schools, from teachers. It is a simple process of feeding our bio-computer, the brain, with information. The brain goes on accumulating it. The brain is a sophisticated complex instrument, the most sophisticated one. Man has yet to make computers as complicated as the brain.

A single man's brain cells can contain the information available in all the libraries in the whole world. Yet man can remain the same!

Wisdom occurs through the growth of one's being. Knowledge happens with the growth of the mind. Forget knowledge and go deeper into wisdom. Wisdom can't be taught like knowledge. But you can learn it by opening your heart in deep trust to the wind, rain, and sun, to the whole of Existence. And in that opening, wisdom arises. In that very opening, in that surrender to the whole, one sees. One is no longer blind.

Man tries to be a master. He is not satisfied being a student. His life is an effort to attain mastery, power and prestige. He tries to accumulate money to be powerful, to have fame, or to make a great empire. This is the worldly man's effort. This is how Alexander the Great moved.

There is a totally different approach to life that is available for us to learn. Look at the lives of Buddha or Christ. They didn't try to be masters of the world. On the contrary, they tried to become servants of the world. The miracle and paradox is that Alexander dies a beggar and Buddha, the beggar, lives like an emperor and dies like an emperor. The paradox is that those who try to be masters are reduced to servants and those who try to be servants become masters.

Logical education teaches us to become masters, because that is all it can see. That is what logic leads us to, step-by-step. It is limited to what the senses see. Our education is about how we can succeed materially in this world. Our measurement of happiness is defined by possessions. It is defined by acquisitions, not by enjoyment.

Only when we go past the logic of such education can we realize true happiness. Then we experience that happiness lies in giving up: giving up control, possessions, and giving up our mental and emotional bondages. Happiness is when we serve others, when we become servants of others. Our current educational system cannot help us learn this. We need to change the system so that it shows us the path to true happiness.



Four Pious Men

7.16 O best among the Bharata [Arjuna], four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me.

They are: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and those searching for knowledge of the Absolute.

7.17 Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge and ever united with Me through single-minded devotion is the best.

I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me.

7.18 All these devotees are indeed noble; one who knows Me, dwells in Me.

Being engaged in My mission, he attains Me.

7.19 After many births and deaths, he who knows Me surrenders to Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is.

Such a great soul is very rare.

Krishna now goes deeper. He talks about the Indian community system.

Before entering into this subject, I bow down to the system that has been created by the ṛṣis (sages), which has made the whole spiritual science a reality. I bow down to the community system which kept our scriptures alive, the spiritual science alive.

In these modern times, abusing our community system and abusing the social system created by the ṛṣis has become a fashion! Bashing our *vedic* system or

abusing our *vedic* system has become a fashion. Especially in Southern India, abusing the *vedic* system and abusing *swamis* has become the trend. If you want to show you are educated or an important person, abuse our *vedic* system. You can immediately gain popularity. There will be at least ten foolish people to listen to what you say. It is an easy and cheap way to gain popularity.

Not only have we not understood our *vedic* system, we have also started disrespecting this great system created by our ancient masters. Please understand, only because of our *ṛsis* and because of the system that they created, the spiritual culture in India is alive today, in fact India itself is still alive today.

The other day I read Paramahansa Yogananda's autobiography. There's a beautiful reference from the *Book of Genesis* where Abraham prays to God. He requests God not to destroy a particular piece of land. God says, 'If I find ten good people in that land, I will not destroy that land.'

From this statement, you will understand why India is still alive. India is still alive and that's the greatest miracle of God. And it's all because of these ten people.

No other culture has survived or lived for such a long time. All other cultures that came into existence along with or after the Indian culture - Babylonian, Roman, Greek, etc. - knew how to fight, how to build empires and big cities in a professional way. They knew how to protect themselves. They were great warriors! Yet they were unable to survive. Today we see only their relics. These cultures are not alive today. Of the Indian culture, the Indian system, we have at least 10,000 years of recorded history.

There's a beautiful book written by Swami Prakashananda Saraswati. The book is a comprehensive history of religion in Indian culture. He has recorded Indian history in a beautiful way. According to him, the Indian culture is trillions of years old. Anyway, we can be sure of one thing - that we have at least 10,000 years of recorded history of the Indian culture.

No other country has been invaded as much as India. India has been invaded by practically every culture, every country. There is nobody who has not invaded the Indian soil. Yet, no country has been invaded by India. India has never invaded any country. It never went out to destroy or fight with another country. India stayed within its boundaries. India was again and again invaded, but it never invaded anybody. At the end of the day, this is the only culture that is still alive! Only because of this community system is Indian culture alive today.

Another important thing we need to understand when we read these things is this: 'Man cannot live without creating a community.' Man is a social animal. He creates some form of community or other. You cannot say that the United States does not have some form of community system. In other countries also the community system is there. However, these community systems are based upon money.

When I went to Brazil, I gave a discourse to a large company called Petrobras. One man asked, 'How do you justify the community system in India? The high caste people look at the low caste people in a disrespectful way. How do you justify this?'

Of course, there are a few issues in Indian culture also. Indians made mistakes in the sense they missed the spirit with which the community system was developed, and started following the letter. Some mistakes happened. That's true. However, the whole community system cannot be labeled wrong because of a few mistakes.

For example, if someone has a tumor in his body, the tumor must be operated on and removed. You cannot straightaway kill the person! The operation must be done and the tumor removed. We can't abandon the whole person because of the tumour.

And it is we who committed mistakes, and now we are abusing the whole system.

I told him, 'Yes, one or two mistakes happened. But look at the developed countries or so-called cultured countries. If you enter an airplane and walk to the economy class past the first class, watch the way the first class passengers look at you! Have you observed how passengers in first class look at you? Just by observing, you can see how disrespectfully they look at you.'

Don't think there is no community or class system in other countries. In every country, there is a community and class system. The *vedic ṛsis* at least created the community and caste system based upon intelligence and wisdom. With *ṛsis*, the community system was created based upon intelligence, based upon knowledge, based upon wisdom. In other cultures, the community system was created based upon money and power.

In countries where the rulers are *kṣatriyas* (warrior class), are the ones who create the community system based upon power. The more powerful someone is, the more respected he is. In other countries, people who do business, the business

class people, control the whole system. There the more money someone has, the more he is respected.

India is the only country where people who respected intelligence and wisdom created the whole system. The system was created based upon intelligence, based upon wisdom. So that is why, in India, the more wisdom a person carries, the more he is respected. The more spiritual he is, the more he is respected.

The whole social system was created based upon sharing. Man must contribute something to the community.

Let me describe the spirit with which the whole system was created, and how we abused it. Of course, we abused it; we did not imbibe the true spirit completely. If we had imbibed the whole spirit completely, we wouldn't have fallen into this state. Let us first understand the spirit with which the whole system was created. Then we will understand where we made mistakes. Then we should understand how we can revive it and practise it again in our life.

First, the whole system is *not* based upon our birth. It is based upon our character. Krishna says again and again in the Gita that it is based upon our *guṇas* (nature), based upon our attitude towards life. A person who works driven by fear, one who works out of fear, belongs to the working class called *śūdra*. A person who works out of greed, belongs to the merchant or business class called *vaiśya*. A person who works to get attention or to prove that he is superior, belongs to the *kṣatriya* community. A person who works out of gratitude, expressing his bliss, is a *brāhmaṇa*. This was how people were categorized in those days.

Everybody must contribute something to society. A person may share his time if he has nothing else; he has only one thing and that is time. A person who shares his time is a worker, a *śūdra*. He belongs to the working class.

A person who shares products has time and a little bit of intelligence to create products. He creates products and shares the products with society. He is a *vaiśya*, a merchant. These people belong to the merchant or business class.

The person who shares confidence, who gives courage to the community, who gives confidence to the whole community, is a *kṣatriya*, a warrior! He unites the whole group as a community in a solid way by giving confidence, by sharing his confidence.

The person who shares his knowledge, bliss or spiritual wisdom, is a *brāhmaṇa*.

This type of division is completely based upon our role, the role we play in the community, which is based upon our character. In no way is it related to our birth.

Please be very clear that this is the spirit with which the whole system was created. This is the spirit with which the *vedic ṛṣis* designed the system. Here nobody is higher and nobody is lower. Be aware that no one is higher and no one is lower as it is practised today. In the course of time, one or two mistakes happened. But because of that we can't say that the whole system is wrong. We can't say that the whole system is a failure because of one or two mistakes.

*caturvidhā bhajante mām janāḥ sukṛtino'ṛjuna ।
āṛto jijñasurarthā jñānī ca bharata ṛṣabha ॥ 7.16*

‘O best among the Bharata, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who searches for knowledge of the Absolute.’

Here Krishna talks about those who approach the Divine and the ways in which they approach the Divine. Man is centered on seven basic emotions. Basically we live and work based on these seven emotions: greed, fear, worry, attention-need (name and fame), comparison and jealousy, ego and the last one, the seventh emotion, deep discontentment.

These are the qualities with which man lives. These are the qualities with which he works. Man is centered on these seven different emotions.

In every moment, if we scan our life, we work based upon these seven emotions: out of greed, fear, worry, attention-need, jealousy and comparison, ego or deep discontentment. Man is centered on these seven different energy centers. These seven emotions are seven energy centers that supply energy to us, fuel for us. If we analyze and look deeply into it, everything that we do in life, is rooted in one of these seven emotions.

If we are centered on greed, we approach God in the same way. Goddess Lakshmi (goddess of wealth) appeals to us. We want Lakshmi because we are completely centered on greed. Or we continuously run behind Kubera (Lord of wealth) and perform Kubera *yajña* (fire rituals related to Kubera), Kubera *pūjā* (worship of Kubera); we continuously repeat the concept of Kubera.

Please understand that when we feel we are missing something, we try to get fulfilment by creating our own God and approaching Him in that mold. We try to get fulfilment by approaching the Divine in the same mold and with the same emotion, the same feeling that we miss in our being.

One more thing: When we become mature, when maturity happens to us, we approach the same Lakshmi as Gnana Lakshmi (goddess of wisdom as wealth)! We pray to the same goddess to give us wisdom, to give us knowledge.

According to our maturity we project and see the Divine. Understand, it is not that we should not approach the Divine from greed. There's nothing wrong in approaching the Lord from greed. There's nothing wrong in starting our life with prayers for boons. However, we should not end our life also with prayers for boons. Then there is something wrong. It's a good start, but a bad end!

Vivekananda beautifully says, 'It's good to be born in the church, but not to die there.' Before we die, we should grow out of it. We must become mature; we must realize the other dimensions of the Divine, the other dimensions of our being.

In prayer, we pray to God; in meditation, we become God! Prayers give us immediate results. Praying to that higher principle or to the Divine is not wrong, yet it is not enough. Whereas in meditation, we become that higher principle or the Divine to which we constantly pour out our prayers. This is permanent.

The Divine is nothing but a mirror; we see our own reflection. And whatever we do to the Divine comes back to us. The more we understand, the more we grow and relate with the Divine in a more mature way. Otherwise we are confused and caught like a drunkard.

A small story:

A man returns home very late, completely drunk. He's not able to walk. He somehow makes his way into the house, stumbles over a table and breaks a piece of glass. Not only does he break a piece of glass, the glass cuts him badly. He goes to the bathroom and tries to bandage himself, looking in the mirror. Then slowly, without making a sound, he enters the bedroom and falls asleep.

The next morning, his wife starts her enquiry, 'What happened? What did you do last night?'

He replies, 'I didn't do anything. I am ok.'

The wife says, 'No, tell me why you were late.'

He says, 'I went and had a few drinks.'

She says, 'That's ok, but did you hurt yourself?'

He says, 'No, I did not hurt myself.'

She asks, 'Then why did you put so many bandages on the mirror?'

Instead of putting the bandages on himself, he put the bandages on the mirror!

If we are drunk, if we are unaware, we land up doing the same thing! We would do everything to the mirror. We miss where we are supposed to work. Catching the mirror and catching the form is one and the same. Catching the form is nothing but catching the mirror. If we put the bandage on the mirror, we can never be healed. The mirror should be used to find out where to put the bandage on us. We cannot heal ourselves by putting bandages on the mirror.

In the same way, we should use God or the Divine like a mirror to find out where we have a problem. The healing work should be done on us, not on the mirror. Don't miss and try to do the healing work on the mirror. If we do that we will miss the whole thing.

This reminds me of another story, a true incident.

A small-time astrologer used to visit the Bangalore ashram. Suddenly, one day he came to the ashram in a car.

I asked, 'What happened? Suddenly you have a new car. Did you win a lottery?'

He replied, 'No *Swamiji*, it's the grace of Lakshmi *yantra* (*yantra* means instrument and Lakshmi means wealth; so Lakshmi *yantra* refers to an instrument giving wealth). It's because of Lakshmi *yantra*,' he said.

I asked him, 'Who gave you the *yantra*? I have never heard of something called Lakshmi *yantra*. Who gave it to you?'

He said, 'Nobody gave it to me *Swamiji*. I give it to people!'

Whether the person who received Lakshmi *yantra* became rich or not, the person who made money selling it became rich!

So be very clear: Starting life with prayers is ok, it is a good start, but it is not the right place to end.

At the next level, the person is centered on fear and so he worships gods who will protect him. He is continuously centered on fear. He does the Sudarshana *homa* (*homa* refers to making offerings into a consecrated fire; Sudarshana *homa* refers to the fire ritual done for general protection), or he continuously does Mrityunjaya *homa* (fire ritual done to avoid untimely death and improve longevity) for protection. He goes around the *navagraha* (the shrine of the nine planets

collectively known as the *navagraha*, found in most Hindu temples). He continuously goes about worshipping some planet or god. That's why tribal gods have big swords. In many Indian villages also, you see gods with swords and big weapons. People who are fear-centered worship gods with weapons. All this is ok, nothing wrong, but it is not the place to stop.

Anyway, approaching the Divine out of greed is the first step. Approaching the Divine out of fear is the next step.

The third level is, approaching the Divine because of worry. Again, worry is nothing but fear and greed. The mixture of fear and greed is worry. With worry, we approach the Divine in the same way. We pray to the Divine, 'Please help me stop worrying. Please help me come out of these worries.' At this point, we may do yoga or meditation for the sake of peace - not for spiritual enlightenment, but to calm our mind, to get a little peace and give rest to the mind.

The next level is based on attention-need. It is based on name and fame, i.e. we approach the Divine for the sake of name and fame, for the sake of capturing the attention of people. Not only do we pray to the Divine, we gradually start representing the Divine also. I have seen many people who start representing the Divine. If you go to India, you will see that the people who run temples behave almost like God. It's a big problem. The person who runs the temple thinks he is God because he takes care of the whole thing. He knows the tricks of the trade. He thinks, 'I am everything. When I know the whole thing, why not use the situation to my best advantage?' That's where the problem starts.

I tell people: Unless you are mature, never take up the task of running a temple. One person asked me, 'I don't believe in spirituality, I am not a spiritual person. However, I want to run a temple as a social service. I want to do it as a social service. Shall I do it?'

I told him, 'Never make that mistake! Never do it. If you are not spiritually mature and you enter this work, surely you will trouble yourself and others. By and by, it will become a pure name-and-fame game! And naturally you will not only hurt yourself, you will hurt others too. Never take up the responsibility unless you are spiritually mature.'

There's a beautiful ritual performed during the installation of a deity in a temple, called *prāṇa pratiṣṭha*. The scriptural instruction is that the person who installs the deity must be enlightened. Otherwise, the person who installs the deity receives the collective negativity of the people who pray in that temple. It's a frightening idea.

It may be a frightening idea, but don't think it's a lie. It has meaning. The person who takes up this job without spiritual maturity will naturally end up with name and fame problems. He creates problems for himself and others. He starts representing the Divine. He puts himself in the place of the Divine and acts on behalf of the Divine.

The people who stand and pray in front of God, the deity, are gullible because they are caught in fear and greed. You can easily exploit them. You can make them do what you want them to do because they are already in trouble. They are wait for a solution. They are search for a solution. So naturally you can take them for a ride. That is the reason why again and again, it is emphasized that only an enlightened person should run a spiritual organization.

If we give a spiritual project to a person who has only the attitude of a businessman, he turns the whole thing into a business. He makes the whole thing into a matter of accounts. The Divine cannot be brought under accounts and mathematical calculations! The whole thing loses its spirit. The original spirit and inspiration with which the whole thing was created will not be realized.

That is why masters emphasize again and again that we need spiritual maturity before we enter into these activities. Spiritual maturity is the basic need. Don't come to the Divine for name and fame. You will miss it and mess it.

The next is comparison and jealousy. This is an extreme step. People always compare with others, and they feel jealous of the others' position, their status or their wealth. A person who compares and feels jealous can never rest. Look into what makes us run in our lives. Why do we feel like running continuously? Why are we in a hurry? Why do you think we run?

There is a beautiful verse that says, 'Just as a monkey-charmer makes a monkey dance using a stick, *māyā* or illusion, makes us dance with a single stick called jealousy.' With one stick, *māyā* makes us dance. We all dance all kinds of dances because of one stick! The moment we think somebody has more than we do, we hurry. We are in a hurry!

A small story:

A man entered a bar and ordered for five drinks. Without pausing, he gulped down all five glasses.

The bartender asked him, 'Why are you in a hurry?'

The man replied, 'You would also be in a hurry, if you had what I have.'

The bartender asks sympathetically, 'What is the problem? What do you have?'

The man replied, 'Only 50 cents.'

Don't be in a hurry! This man says, 'I have only 50 cents.' If we are in a hurry, please be very clear, we have only 50 cents. We don't trust ourselves. That is why we run. We don't think we can achieve by being relaxed. We don't trust our energy. We hurry because we only have 50 cents. We want to grab and finish everything before the other person realizes we have only 50 cents. We don't want someone to see that we are inadequate.

Don't be in a hurry! We don't need to run. If we are centered on jealousy and comparison, again we approach the Divine from that angle and only for that purpose.

I have heard some people who run temples in India say, 'Only in my temple, we have a hundred foot high tower; in my temple, we have diamond crowns and twenty-four carat gold crowns. I have this, I have that!' With the Divine also, people boast and compare.

We do this even in our homes. In San Jose, I visited a devotee. He took me to his prayer room and started explaining about each of the ten photographs that were there. For each photo he gave at least half an hour's explanation.

He said, 'No copy of this photograph exists anywhere else on planet earth.'

I asked, 'How is that possible? There must be at least a few prints.'

He said, 'No! All other prints are destroyed! This is the only print available.'

It is hard to imagine the extent of foolishness people go to and what type of things they do if they are caught in jealousy and comparison. One is constantly caught in: this is mine; that is mine; this is the way I do it, etc.

We need to realize that each of us is unique. God is not a machinist; He is an artist. He sculpts each of us with His hands, lovingly and uniquely. Therefore, each one of us is different.

When we approach the Divine with the mentality of jealousy and comparison, we are caught again. People ask me, '*Swamiji*, in our epics, we read about gods and goddesses fighting out of jealousy and greed, out of anger. What do you say about that?'

Please be very clear, those epics were written for people caught in jealousy, so that they could relate with them. Don't think that the Divine has done those things. The Divine never makes those mistakes! But if people think that the Divine has also made those mistakes, it means that they are relating with Him in their own mold!

Even rituals are done only so that people feel comfortable with God and they start coming closer to Him. When people witness the ceremony of Gods getting married, they feel comfortable and safe. They feel, 'Yes, I can relate with Him now. He is like me.' To give a feeling of comfort, to make people feel relaxed, these stories are told and these things are expressed.

You see, unless the Divine is expressed in our language, we will not be able to relate with It. That is why these stories are written.

Next is the person who is centered on ego. This is slightly more difficult to deal with! The person who is centered on ego tries to get name and fame for himself. The person who is centered on name and fame starts claiming that he is divine without expressing the qualities of the Divine.

That is why there's a beautiful *Upaniṣad* verse that says: If you are divine, express it by your quality. Let people recognize it by your quality, not by your words.

What you do speaks for you; what you speak will not do anything for you. What you do, the way in which you work, speaks for you. Your words will not work for you.

There's a short, beautiful *Upaniṣad* called Paramahansa Upanishad. It says, A *Paramahansa* should not wear the saffron robe. Actually, technically speaking, I am not supposed to wear this saffron robe. They say we are not respected the way we have to be if we wear this saffron robe. By our very *quality*, we should be respected. Because of our quality, because of our divinity we should be respected. The divine qualities expressed in our life, that alone should be respected, and not this robe. The respect should not come because of this robe or tradition. It should come because of the enlightened qualities expressed through us.

Yesterday there was a question: How do we know if a person is egoistic or he is a real spiritual master?

A person who is egoistic can only play with words. Only a person who has achieved enlightenment can radiate the energy to reproduce the same experience in you. A person who has achieved creates the experience in you. If you get the

experience, then be very clear your master is enlightened. He is divine. He is the embodiment of spiritual experience and knowledge. If you get the words but not the experience, be very clear, the person or the path you are following is not the ultimate.

Words are like the menu card. Experience is like the food. If you go to a restaurant and they give you a menu card and say, 'Here is the menu card, but the food is not available here,' can you call that a restaurant? No! The menu card is not enough; your hunger cannot be satisfied by it. Words are like the menu card. Experience is like the food. Be very clear, in spiritual life we cannot stop with just the menu card.

The person who has approached the Divine with ego always tries to represent the Divine without having the solid experience himself. That is why the *Upaniṣads* again and again emphasize experience. If we don't experience, be very clear there's something seriously wrong with the person whom we are following.

I always tell people, if you have not experienced anything with me, please follow some other person. It is easy to put the blame and responsibility on the disciples and continuously blame them by saying: You are not qualified, you are not practising perfectly, you are not practising regularly, you have not tried, and that is why you have not had any experience.

This is a cunning way of cheating the disciple and evading the truth. The disciple comes to a guru because the disciple has not yet experienced. And the guru says, 'You are imperfect and that is why you do not have spiritual experiences.' To learn this, one doesn't need a guru: a spouse is sufficient! Anyway, this is what the spouses tell each other continuously. From morning till night, that's what the wife tells the husband or the husband tells the wife. She doesn't need a guru to tell her that she is imperfect.

A true master will reproduce in you the same experience that happened in him, no matter what your condition is.

A scientist is a person who creates a formula to reproduce what he experienced in the outer world. A spiritual master or a mystic is a person who creates a formula to reproduce his experience in the inner world. For example, Newton saw an apple fall from a tree and he understood something. He created a formula to reproduce the same understanding in everybody else. Likewise, a master or a mystic creates formulae or techniques to reproduce the same experience that happened in him in everybody else.

I always tell people: If you have not experienced anything by attending our meditation programs and meditation camps, be very clear, something is wrong with me, not with you. Forget about me; carry on with your life. You may meet some other master.

I am enlightened only if you can experience my enlightenment, not otherwise. Before that, it's mere words, a mere menu card. A menu card will not help you. It cannot remove your hunger. It can only create more hunger. It can only create more trouble. So don't stop with the menu card. What you hear is only the menu card. Aim directly at the Divine.

The person who approaches the Divine with ego gets everything and boosts his own ego. He never surrenders to the Divine. He becomes more egoistic. His ego becomes stronger by getting all the knowledge.

Be very clear, these are the most dangerous people. Instead of surrendering their ego to the Divine, they strengthen their ego with their knowledge. Knowledge can be used in two ways. With this knowledge, you can surrender to the Divine; or with this knowledge, you can make others surrender to you! It is up to you how you use it.

A small story:

A king went to the forest to hunt. Suddenly he saw more than fifty trees with the target mark: marked circles within circles, like a bull's eye. In the center, there was an arrow. There were target marks and an arrow pierced exactly in the center. He saw so many target marks and the arrow was exactly in the center in all of them. He wanted to find out who had mastered the art of archery. 'Who is this person? He must be a great master. He must have mastered the art. He must be like Arjuna,' he thought to himself.

Suddenly he saw a young boy with bow and arrows; the same colored arrows that he saw on the target marks.

He asked him, 'Are you the person who shot the arrows?'

The boy replied, 'Yes, I am the person.'

The happy king congratulated him saying, 'From this day onwards, I appoint you as commander-in-chief of my army. I appreciate your mastery over archery, your power, and your capacity. Please tell me how you mastered such a great art at such a young age. How did you achieve perfection at such a young age?'

The boy replied, 'It's simple. First I shot the arrow, and then I marked the circles. That's all!'

Be very clear, if we approach the Divine with ego, we do the same thing. Instead of aiming at the center, we shoot arrows and then create the circles. Instead of aiming at the center, we create the center according to our aim. When we approach the Divine with ego, instead of surrendering our ego, we strengthen our ego with knowledge. And it is dangerous.

The next level is the ultimate level. In this level, we go to the Divine with the attitude of gratitude, with the ultimate gratitude. Here, the whole relationship takes a different turn. We feel so grateful, so deeply connected to the Divine, that our whole life changes.

We move from the first level of greed, where we pray to boon-giving gods, to the next level of fear where the gods who can protect us appeal to us. The next is worry. Buddha appeals to us if we are centered on worry because he appears to be so peaceful and calm. To the person who is centered on name and fame, gods who give name and fame appeal the most.

In the same way as with gods, people also approach masters from all these various levels.

I have seven kinds of people who approach me: *One*, people who approach me out of greed; *two*, people who approach me out of fear; *three*, people who approach me out of worry; *four*, people who approach me for name and fame; *five*, people who approach me out of jealousy and comparison (comparison in terms of: 'That guru has only one or two ashrams. This guru has more ashrams at a young age. He must be a big guru.');

six, people who approach me out of ego, to strengthen their ego by saying, 'I am a disciple of Paramahansa Nithyananda. I am close to him. He knows my name. He calls me by name.' Just to have ego satisfaction they come to me; finally, *seven* - there are a few, very few who approach me out of gratitude.

There's one more problem with people who approach me out of greed. Not only do they have greed, they also have their own ideas and fantasies about a master. They come with a frame and see whether I fit into that frame or not.

Also, I face a big problem because of my young age. Let me narrate to you an incident that happened in our India ashram:

One day I was sitting outdoors in the ashram. I was sitting alone, without my turban. Nobody was around me. Our ashram is located next to a forest.

Bears and cheetah come in from the forest area. I was sitting there on a small rock, enjoying the cool breeze. One well-read, elderly scholar came to me and asked, 'I want to meet Swamiji. Where is he?' I told him, 'Please go and sit in the Ananda Sabha (meditation hall). He will come in half an hour's time.' He went and sat in the meditation hall.

He went and sat in the hall. After half an hour, I wore my turban and *rudrākṣa* rosary and went there and was about to take my seat. This man said, 'No! I want to meet the big Swamiji. I want to meet *Guruji* (master).'

I said, 'Please forgive me. In this ashram I am the *swami*. Whom do you want to meet?' He said, 'I have heard about Paramahansa Nithyananda. He healed my cousin. I want to see him.' Then I told him his cousin's name and the disease he had and that I had healed him. I told him, 'I am Paramahansa Nithyananda.' You will be surprised; he was not ready to believe me. He just stared at me.

Then I said, 'Usually, *swamis* don't carry any ID card (identity card) in India. Still, if you don't believe me, look at that photograph (on the ashram signboard). See the name, and see that face. I am that swami! I can't say anything more to convince you.'

You will be surprised! I tell you, this is the truth. He said, 'I am not ready to learn from you.' He did not speak to me, and also went away. Because of his strong fantasies and imagination about what a guru should be like, he was not able to even relate with me!

When we have such strong fantasy or imagination about things, we will not be able to relate with reality. It will be difficult to relate with reality. That man said, 'I have nothing to ask you about, nothing to talk to you about,' and he went away. When we can't drop our strong imagination, naturally we won't be able to relate with reality. It is the same with fear; people who come with fear will never be able to get rid of that fear. They will be stuck with that because fear itself is a fantasy.

At different levels, people approach the master or God. The more mature we are, the more we will feel connected to that person who will give us fulfilment. When we become mature, when we are above fear and greed, please be very clear, we will approach the same master, the same God, with more maturity, with more intimacy. We will feel deeply connected to him.

In Bhagavatam (an Indian epic), we learn about five different attitudes with which we normally relate with a master or God:

- 1) *Dāsa Bhāva* - seeing God as a lord or master and oneself as a servant, as with Hanuman who saw Rama as his master and served Him as a path for liberation.
- 2) *Vātsalya Bhāva* - seeing God as a divine child, as with Yashoda who saw Krishna as her son.
- 3) *Sakha Bhāva* - seeing God or the master as a friend, the way Arjuna related with Krishna.
- 4) *Mātr Bhāva* - seeing God or the master as a father or mother, the way Ramakrishna related with goddess Kali (representation of the divine mother).

Ramakrishna really felt goddess Kali to be his mother. He always tasted the food before offering it to Her. The temple organizers scolded him, 'No, you cannot do this. It is sacrilegious! You cannot offer food to God after you have tasted it.'

Ramakrishna said, 'If you say that, I will leave the temple. But I cannot give food to my mother unless I taste it first. Unless I know it is good food, I cannot give it to Her. I have no problem in leaving the temple and worshipping from outside. But I will not stop what I am doing.'

Ramakrishna deeply felt that goddess Kali was his mother.

5) Finally, the fifth attitude is *madhura bhāva* - seeing God as a beloved, the way Radha saw Krishna. This attitude needs a tremendous amount of maturity. Only if we experience the consciousness which is beyond the body, can we relate with the Divine with the attitude of a beloved, *madhura bhāva*.

These are the five different *bhāvas* (attitudes) with which people relate with the Divine. With different maturity levels, different attitudes suit our minds. According to our maturity, our attitude differs. The more mature we are, the more the gratitude happens. The less the maturity, the more we fill our life with prayers. Prayer is greed; confession is fear!

That is why I say, 'Gratitude is the greatest prayer, and thank you, the greatest *mantra*.'

When we go beyond prayer and confession, we experience gratitude. We experience the Divine. Krishna explains how we can grow step-by-step, how we can

reach the ultimate maturity, how we can create and experience the Divine at the ultimate level. He explains the process step-by-step.

Let us see how Krishna explains. What is the technique Krishna offers us to grow in maturity and experience eternal consciousness?

*caturvidhā bhajante mām janāḥ sukṛtino'ṛjuna ।
ārto jijñasurarthārthī jñānī ca bharataṛṣabha ॥ 7.16*

Based on how we approach the Divine, the community system is created. Only based on how mature we are, the whole community system has been created. How much we share with society depends on how mature we are. With the same maturity, we approach God also.

If we miss money, if we feel money is missing in our lives, we go to the God who gives money. If we miss knowledge, we go to Saraswati (the goddess of knowledge), who gives knowledge. If we feel insecure, we go to the god who protects us; we go to Mother Durga or Kali. If we miss spiritual experience, the ultimate experience, then we go to the divine incarnations, the ultimate expressions of the Divine.

Krishna says, 'Four types of people come to Me - *caturvidhā bhajante mām*.' He explains the four types as four communities. The first are the people who are distressed, i.e., the working class or *sūdra*. The second are the people who desire wealth, i.e., the business people or *vaiśya*. The third are inquisitive people who continuously enquire, continuously ask, '*Tataḥ kim? Tataḥ kim? Tataḥ kim?*' (What next? What next? What next?) A *kṣatriya*, for example, never rests because he constantly asks, 'What next? What next? What next?' The fourth is the person who searches for knowledge of the Absolute: He is a *brāhmaṇa*.

'All four come to Me, all four reach Me, but from different levels.' Please be very clear, from different levels all four go to the same God, but they will not experience Him in the same way. They experience Him in different ways.

You may go to the same god or a different god, but according to your maturity, you experience the Divine. As long as you are caught in fear or greed, you go only to those types of gods. You will be attracted to only those types of gods.

That is why again and again I tell people, 'It is easy to go to a temple and pray, but difficult to go to a master and meditate. It is for mature people, not for everyone.' In the temple we see thousands; but in spiritual places, we see a few hundred. It is not for all; it's a luxury!

Spirituality is a luxury; only a few intelligent people can afford it! The price of spirituality is the limit of our suffering! Only if we have had enough suffering can we afford to get into spirituality. If we have not had enough suffering, or if we have not understood that we have had enough suffering, we cannot enter spirituality. It is only for people who have suffered, who have understood that they have suffered. There are two things: It is not only the suffering, but the understanding that we suffer. This understanding is what I call intelligence. This intelligence happens even beyond age and experience. Just a glimpse of life is enough if this intelligence is there; we will understand how suffering happens and we will not get caught in it! Both - the suffering and the understanding - are needed to enter into spiritual life. Spirituality is a luxury. It is not for all. Religion is for everybody. Only a few mature people can enter spirituality.

The person who approaches Me out of love and gratitude, is the best person, for I am dear to him and he is dear to Me. By this one verse, Krishna ends the whole conversation, the whole concept.

Krishna says, 'Starting at different levels is ok, but don't stop there.' We can start or take off from any level. However we should not stop and stagnate there. It is like failing to proceed to the second standard from the first. It is as if we want to stay in the same cozy, familiar level.

It takes many lifetimes to understand and achieve this maturity. However, we should not think, 'Let me take some more lives to become mature. What is the hurry?' When I say it takes many lives, some think, 'Let me take some more lives and become mature.' Now, that's a big problem. Whenever we speak, we must make things very clear, otherwise you can't imagine how many different ways people will interpret it!

A small story:

Once, a great scholar recounted the story of Harishchandra. Most people in India know the story of Harishchandra, a king who lived to uphold the truth and sold his wife for the sake of the truth. Just to keep his promise, he sold his wife. Such was his greatness.

The scholar narrated the whole story. After narrating the story, he asked one person, 'What did you understand from this story?'

The person said, 'Master, I understood that truth is the most important thing in life. We should give up everything for the sake of the truth. Truth is the ultimate.'

The scholar was pleased. He asked the next person, 'What did you understand?'

The man said, 'Master, I understood that in an emergency, it is ok to sell your wife.'

From the same story, two people have two different understandings! So be very clear, don't miss the understanding.

A common saying is, 'As many masters, so many paths.' However I say, 'As many disciples, so many paths!'

The master may utter the same truth to his disciples, yet each understands and interprets in his or her own way. Again, the understanding depends on the maturity of the person receiving the truths. They all approach the Divine, but from different planes. Hence the attitude with which one approaches matters a lot. Based on that one experiences the Divine differently. If we miss the understanding, we misunderstand.

Here Krishna says, 'Out of these, the wise is always devoted to Me. He is the best person.' To start with, you can start at any level, yet you must strive to reach the Ultimate. And one more thing that I want to make clear is, please don't think, 'Oh! Krishna says it will take many lives; let me take some more lives and become mature.'

No! If you can enter into the knowledge this moment, the experience can happen to you this very moment. You don't need to postpone.

Every moment is a new birth for you. Every moment is death and every moment is birth. The outgoing breath is death, and the incoming breath is birth. So be very clear, every moment you die and take birth. This moment can be a new birth for you. The person who understands this truth takes a new birth. He is called *dvija*.

A person who is initiated is called *dvija* in Sanskrit, which means twice-born or reborn. All *sanyāsi* are twice-born or *dvija*. They are the reborn or born-again people. 'Reborn' does not refer to being reborn physically, but at the being level. At the being level, they have taken a new birth. They give birth to themselves. They become newborn beings. So understand that in this moment, a new birth can happen to you.

Krishna says: *aham sa ca mama priyah* - He is dear to Me, and I am dear to him. He is in Me and I am in him. Krishna says beautifully that He is in you and you are in Him. The moment you understand this ultimate Truth, the moment you approach the Divine with the right attitude, you become the Divine. All you need to do is change your attitude. Over! Change your attitude and the whole thing is done.

One more thing you must understand. The master or the Divine is in you only when you engage yourself in service to Him. Sitting in front of the master or the Divine, just enjoying the form, is not the service Krishna talks about. Then you are only chasing Him from a purely selfish motive.

When you devote yourself to the divine mission, you become a devotee. That is when you become dear to Him. Your worship is no longer selfish. It is towards the mission of the Divine, in whatever form.

I tell my followers: Stop sitting in front of me, gazing and waiting for words to drop. Work for my mission. Help me transform people. As long as you sit and gaze, you chase me. When you work for my mission, I chase you. I shall always be with you.

When the scriptures say, 'Follow the master,' they do not mean to follow the form. They advise you to follow the teachings of the master, so that you can be the master too. They tell you to follow the institution of the master, his community.

That is why the Buddhist prayer says:

Buddham śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi
dharmam śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi
saṅgam śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi

Buddham does not refer to the man, Buddha; it refers to state of Buddha; *dharmam* are His teachings and *saṅgam* is His institution. When we follow these three, which define the master's mission, we are on the path to liberation.

This is an important statement. Only after many births and deaths can we relate to an enlightened person. We will not be able to relate to an enlightened master unless we undergo many births and deaths.

I told you about the seven steps in spiritual progress: 1) go around many temples, perform many rituals, pilgrimages, etc 2) do rituals by yourself 3) concentrate and pray to one God 4) instead of rituals, chant verses in praise of God 5) instead of chanting, visualize His form and meditate upon it 6) instead of

meditating on any form, fall into that same consciousness, realize that the form and your soul are one and the same, that God and the soul are one and the same 7) experience reality!

Don't think these seven steps will be done in one lifetime. People take hundreds of lives to achieve this maturity. It is rare to achieve this maturity. Krishna says: *sa mahātmā sūdurlabhaḥ* – indeed, very rare is it to see such souls who have achieved that maturity.

It is easy to relate with gods in the temple because they don't demand that we should be pure. They don't demand discipline from us. We can pray to Him, do whatever we want, and think He has blessed us and go away. However, relating with a living enlightened master is difficult.

People ask me, 'Why do masters become popular after their death?' After death, all masters become popular because it's easy to cheat ourselves with a photograph. We can keep His photograph and do whatever we want and think these are His teachings. And we will have no problem. There is nobody to question us. There is nobody to ask us anything. We can do whatever we want and project everything as His blessings, and we can play with the photograph. It is easy. That is why dead masters become popular.

And most importantly, we don't have to give up our ego with dead masters. We just need to keep their photograph, put a garland over it, wave lit lamps in front of it, and then proceed to do whatever we want in the outer world! Sometimes we sit beneath that photograph and represent the master to people who visit us. No problem! It's an easy game. But the whole game is nothing but an ego fulfilling game. That is the danger in it.

Connecting with dead masters is easy because they don't demand our ego. We don't need to surrender. Nothing needs to be done. That is why there will be large crowds with dead masters and temples. The crowd will be so much because nothing needs to be done. All we need to do is think that we have done everything and that we are blessed.

But with a living master, we need to transform our life. We need to experience the truth. He will not let us sleep. He will not let us rest. He will haunt us until we realize the truth. He will not let us do what we want. He will not fulfil our ego.

I always tell people, 'Dead masters are dead. The living master is death!'

The living master will be death for us. He will be death for our ego. We cannot play our games with him. We must grow. We must become mature beings. We

cannot play the same old game and put his name in front. He shakes us. He awakens us.

Somebody asked the enlightened sage Ramana Maharishi, 'If this whole world is *māyā* (illusion), I see the master also in the same dream, I see the enlightened person also in the same dream, I see You also in the same dream. How is it going to help me?'

Ramana Maharishi said, 'If we see a lion in our dream, what happens? We wake up immediately. In the same way, if we see a master, be very clear, we wake up from our dream! The master is a *simha svapna* - lion-dream or nightmare!'

Living masters are nightmares. That is why we are afraid. People are afraid to come near a living master. We can't play the same game with him. The game won't be ours. It will be his! He is the director. That is why it is frightening to fall in tune with a living master!

Only a person who has understood, after many, many births and deaths, who has matured, who has enough knowledge, surrenders to Me, surrenders to the living master, says Krishna.

In India, especially in Tamil Nadu, kids play with wooden dolls. They have four to five dolls. I have seen them play. For one doll, they will drape a *sari* and say, 'This is mother.' They will dress another in a *dhoti* and say, 'This is father.' For another doll, they will put on a skirt and say, 'This is sister.' They will dress another one in trousers and say, 'This is brother.'

And they start their game. They say, 'Mother is cooking,' and they take the mother doll and make it stand near the toy kitchen. They say, 'Father is going to office,' and place the father doll in a small car, and they will drive it too. They will make honking sounds, 'peem... peem...' to give an effect of a real life scenario, and take the car to office. And then, after a few minutes they will say, 'Sister is going to school.' They will place the sister doll in the toy car and move it around. They will cry and make sounds as though the sister cries because she doesn't want to go to school.

They will enact the scenes of the game. Then they will say, 'Now it is evening, sister comes back from school.' They will bring the sister back. They will bring the father back and say, 'Father comes back from office.'

This seems like a game for kids. But please understand, you play the same game too in your life. You catch somebody and say, 'You are my mother, you are my

father, you are my wife, you are my husband, you are my son, you are my sister, and you are my brother.'

And if that doll doesn't behave according to your frame or your image, you say, 'It's not a good doll, this is not a good toy,' and you throw it away. Sometimes, children hurt themselves with dolls and say, 'This doll hurt me.' They don't realize that they took the doll and poked it into their eyes. They complain that the doll hurt them, and they cry. In the same way, when somebody doesn't behave according to your frame, you feel they hurt you.

To you, a sister means a certain kind of a person; you have an idea that a sister should behave in a certain way. You have an idea of how a mother should be. Similarly, you have an idea about how a wife should be. You want all the dolls to play their role the way you want them to play. When somebody doesn't play their role well, you throw them out of the gate. You don't want to play with that doll.

Suddenly, you die. You leave the body.

When you go to another place, in your next birth, you again catch one more set of dolls and start the same game: my father, my husband, my wife, my daughter, my son, my brother, my sister - and the game starts. Continuously, you play the same game. Sometimes you bring dolls into the game, sometimes you throw dolls out of the game, sometimes you fire them and sometimes you pamper them. If you don't have enough dolls, you get some cats or dogs to play with.

Suddenly, again you die. When you die again, you assume another body. With that body, you catch one more set of people and play the same game!

Again and again, you play the same game. Only a person who is a little mature thinks, 'How many times will I play this same game? What am I doing? How many times will I do this same psychodrama?'

Please understand that the whole thing is a psychodrama! Whether it is a relationship, or whether it is life itself, it is nothing but a psychodrama. You have an agenda. Society has taught you that, as a father, you should behave like this, as a husband you should behave like this, as a son you should behave like this. As long as you follow the agenda, you are considered a good citizen.

When even once, you don't follow that agenda, you are not respected. All the other dolls kick you out of the gate. They tell you that you are not allowed in the

game anymore. You are not invited to parties. That is what is called boycotting. They boycott you and then suddenly one day you realize, 'How many times am I doing the same drama; again and again, the same game!'

The person who understands that he is doing the same drama, playing the same game again and again, has achieved knowledge, the real intelligence about what is happening. Then naturally you surrender. You surrender unto Me, says Krishna.

Krishna says, 'One who understands that the cause of all causes is Me, realizes the ultimate divine. He realizes thus, 'How many times will I play the same drama? How many times will I make the same mistakes?' Until this realization, the whole thing is repeated again and again without end, without the experience.'

'The person who has understood, who has knowledge of this truth, surrenders unto Me, surrenders to the master, an enlightened being, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all there is. Such a great soul is rare.'

Only a person who has achieved this knowledge relates with the master in the real sense. Only he sees the master in the real way. Please be very clear, there's a beautiful verse that says, 'Even if you have *seen* an enlightened master *once*, you will become enlightened.'

Some people come back and ask me, 'Why haven't I become enlightened yet, *Swamiji*?' Be very clear, 'Never think that you are seeing me; never think that by seeing through your eyes, you can see the Divine. You can see my form, but not me. Even if you have seen many enlightened masters, never think that you have seen them. Just by seeing through your eyes, never ever think that you have seen them.'

Even if you have seen them, the attitude with which you have seen them plays a major role. If you went to them with greed, you went to a demigod and not to an enlightened master. If you have gone out of fear, again you have approached a demigod, not an enlightened master.

Only if you go with an attitude of love and gratitude, understanding and maturity, only then do you see a living master, only then do you see an enlightened person. The moment you see an enlightened being AS HE IS, you WILL become enlightened. There's no doubt about it.

Q: Swamiji, I am never comfortable with the status quo; I need to always work towards something, to keep myself busy. Once I am there, I need to move again. Am I on the path, as you say, since I seem to be dissatisfied with the end result?

Interesting! If you are truly on the path and focused on the path, you will enjoy the path. You will not be dissatisfied with what you get at the end. Whatever you receive, wherever you reach will be satisfying. That is what Krishna means by detachment, which is neither attachment and liking, nor aversion and dislike.

Life is a gift, birth is a gift, love is a gift, and death is a gift. If we know how to appreciate them, all are gifts. If we don't know how to appreciate them, there will be nothing but complaints in life. There are two types of people: 1) those who know how to appreciate the beauty of that which is, of that which has been given to them, and 2) those who have no sense of appreciation. They condemn, complain, and ask for more and more.

Only the first kind of people becomes spiritual. The second kind becomes religious. The second kind is bound to deny God sooner or later, because God becomes an enemy who does not fulfill their desires. These people created the proverb, 'Man proposes, God disposes.' Non-spiritual people create such proverbs. They feel frustrated. Whatever happens is wrong. It is never up to the mark. It is never fulfilling, and never to their heart's content; it falls short all the time. They live in misery because there is a grudge, as if they are deprived of something. How can they feel grateful? And without gratitude there is no prayer. Without gratitude there is no spirituality.

Gratitude is the foundation of spirituality. It is the experience of surrender born out of gratitude that becomes the experience of God. The seed of prayer is gratitude. The mind always takes things for granted. The sun rises and the dawn has tremendous beauty. But the mind says, 'So what? It happens every day. It is just another morning.'

This is how the mind looks at things. It becomes insensitive: insensitive to beauty, insensitive to music, insensitive to poetry, insensitive to love, insensitive to everything that is valuable. Then naturally we live in darkness. We live in ugliness. We get used to it and it is our own creation.

Start feeling grateful. Cultivate the sense of appreciation. Praise Existence for what has already been done and then much more will happen to you. The more we praise, the more we become capable of seeing, the more perceptive we become. A prayerful person becomes so perceptive that he sees God everywhere. He finds God's signature everywhere and in everything!

We have forgotten who we are. We have become ignorant of our divine nature. That is our Original Sin. Because we have forgotten ourselves we have forgotten all that is ours, the inner Kingdom of God that is our home. The garden of Eden is not somewhere else. It is in the deep center of our being. It is in fact our natural habitat. Yet we behave as if it is a strange territory. We are not even aware of how to find it.

Bliss results when you find your natural habitat. You are in bliss when you reach your center. Reaching it is only for those who are courageous, daring and brave because bliss happens only when we have moved beyond the known into the unknown. Whenever we become confined to the known, our life becomes routine and repetitive. It goes on moving in the same rut. It goes around in circles, and slowly it dulls our sensitivities, our receptivity. It hardens people. It makes them blind; it makes them deaf. It makes them dumb because there is nothing to see, nothing to hear, nothing to taste and nothing to feel. They have known it all. It is the same repetition. How can there be bliss in such a life?

But if one is courageous enough to move continuously from the known into the unknown, from the familiar into the unfamiliar, one goes beyond misery. It is risky, because the familiar is secure, safe. And who knows what will happen if we go into the unknown, into the uncharted sea? We take our small boat and we go into the uncharted sea. Who knows if we will come back to the old shore again? Who can give us a guarantee? There is no guarantee.

But unless one is ready to risk oneself, one cannot remain blissful. This is the master's whole work. It is to help us in what we believe to be a risky path. It is to help us get out of the mind, to put the mind into deep silence so that the heart can function, to come closer to the heart so that we can hear its message.

Q: I hear what you say about the caste system, that it is based on guṇas or qualities and not on birth, and that all castes are equal, etc. Yet today it does not work that way. There are many other cultures that treat each other better than we do here. Still you say that we are one of the most civilized cultures. I am unable to reconcile the reality with the truth of what you have presented.

Wonderful. This is a doubt that has arisen from your being. I bow down to that. What you have expressed is a plea. You say, 'Please let me understand what this means, I am confused.'

You come from the level of Arjuna, appealing to the master, 'Please clear my doubt. Let me be at peace.' I salute you as well as your question, because when I answer I do not answer your question, I answer you, your being. Where you come from is not violence; it is a genuine dilemma.

In the *vedic* system we had two kinds of scriptures: *Śruti* and *smṛti*. *Śruti* was the truth as experienced by enlightened masters, that they transmitted personally to disciples. *Śruti* means 'what is heard'. The *Veda* and *Upaniṣad* were the primary *śruti*. These truths are timeless and beyond space. They are not historical facts; they are experiential truths.

However, your experiential truth may not be that of another person, and it certainly will not be that of an enlightened master. So, even while studying *śruti*, the inviolable truths, there is often a problem of understanding and acceptance. If Krishna says that the spirit cannot be destroyed, you wonder, 'What is He talking about? What is the spirit, where is the spirit, I do not see one.'

You need to reach the no-mind state of an enlightened master to understand the meaning of their expressions, which are the *śruti*. That is why there are many interpretations of the *vedic* scriptures. Unenlightened beings casually interpret these sacred truths with no understanding. Many cannot even understand the language these were written in.

Sanskrit is a very deep and powerful language to learn. That is why it is called the language of the gods. It has many subtle levels of meaning. Many foreigners have translated our *vedic śruti*, either based on what was translated to them or based on their limited learning. I respect them for their curiosity. But when Indians follow the translations of foreigners - thanks to the fact that they no longer understand the language of their forefathers - we are in a tragic state.

Instead of attempting to read the original because they are too lazy, they are content to read copies. These copies were not merely made with limited understanding of the language, but often with a total misunderstanding of the culture. In many cases, this misunderstanding was deliberate. It was designed to denigrate what was said. That was the only purpose of many translations.

Under the British, many Indians became scholars. Their reputation depended on how they expressed themselves in the language of their masters and rulers, in order to be accepted. For them the easy way out was to follow those of the ruling class whose scholarship had been established. It became a vicious cycle of slaves emulating their rulers and trying to be better than them in misinterpreting their own culture and its truths.

If you doubt me, learn Sanskrit and read the original scriptures. Then read the copies by foreigners and Indians who in turn copied them. You will find the truth for yourself.

Furthermore, understanding the language is no guarantee that we have understood these truths. These scriptural truths are established in different energy levels corresponding to the ones we live in. If we are at the gross physical level of existence, operating only within bounds of the material world, that is the level at which we understand the expressed truth.

However, these truths were expressed at the highest energy level, the *nirvanic* layer of these enlightened masters. Unless we reach that level, we cannot understand the truth of these scriptures. In our Life Bliss Programs, we take people step-by-step through these layers. When I accept someone as my disciple and initiate him, I help him access the *nirvanic* layer. Even that is not enough. I can help him access that point, access the truth once, and provide him the glimpse. After that it is up to the disciple's sincerity and commitment to stay there. This is what Nithya Spiritual Healers and meditation teachers are trained to do.

Many disciples, especially the meditation teachers, kept asking me to talk about scriptures at levels higher than the gross physical level. I tried that once in the Ashtavakra Gita discourses. You can ask them how many understood or even made an attempt to understand.

Many read these scriptures like novels. Or they use them for predictions. People open a page of the Bible or Gita as they do with the Chinese book of predictions and blindly follow what is written on the page that they open. I understand that many people do that with the book *Guaranteed Solutions*, which is based on my teachings in the Life Bliss Program. If we have faith, whatever we read works well for us. This has nothing to do with the page we open.

When we immerse ourselves in the pages of a scripture with total understanding and in deep meditation, we will truly understand and feel the energy of the truths. This has nothing to do with physical and literal understanding of a few words in a language. I am sure that even a monkey can be taught to understand a few words of any language. It does not need the superconscious ability of a human to do that.

All I have said so far is about *vedic śruti*. Bhagavad Gita is a *vedic śruti*, even though it is not a *Veda* or *Upaniṣad* and is a part of an epic which in turn is considered a scripture. As we heard today, Krishna is crystal clear on the classification of this system. It is based upon our nature, the mix of our *guṇas*, and not on our birth.

If we are to blame someone for the mess we have today, we need to look at the colonizing foreign rulers. They corrupted us and our system as part of their calculated effort to destroy our culture. The pity is that they succeeded well in that.

Today we measure someone's capability in India not by their ability to understand traditional culture and value systems, but by their ability to communicate in English and live by Western 'civilized' standards. We are proud not to be 'Indian' or follow our traditional culture. Corruption of this classification system is a result of converting a highly scientific and effective system of education and training namely our *gurukul* system, into a hierarchical system of oppression, as a direct result of foreign imposition on our minds.

Many call this a *varṇa* system, *varṇa* meaning 'color' in Sanskrit. Foreign experts said that this arose from the fact that higher castes were foreign Aryan invaders who were lighter in color. It is surprising then that Vishnu and his incarnations Rama and Krishna are described as dark or blue, the color reserved by these experts for *śūdras*, the lowest class according to them!

Understand two more things. People quote the *Manusmṛti* and similar material as proof that our scriptures differentiated among people based on caste. The *vedic* religion is the only religion that separates truth from facts. The *śruti* are expressions of experienced truths of enlightened masters. They remain as truths, regardless of time and space. On the other hand, *smṛtis*, like those of Manu, are man-made factual regulations. These are based upon the socio-economic conditions prevalent at a point in time and space.

The *vedic* religion, *sanātana dharma*, what we call Hinduism today, has always accepted that *smṛtis* can change; in fact they are meant to change with changing times. What was *smṛti* in Manu's (an early age man whose descendants we are believed to be) time can no longer be true thousands of years later. People who quote *smṛtis* in defense of their criticism of Hindu practices should understand this first. If some Hindus do not accept this, it is for the sake of protecting the socio-economic benefits that have accrued over time, not because of scriptural sanctions.

In fact, as far as I know, Hinduism is the only religion that has the courage to declare that these man-made religious laws can and should change according to the changing culture. No other religion has the courage to allow a part of its compiled scriptures, its religious foundation, to change with time.

God is an artist, not a machinist. He cast each human in a different mold, unique in potential and performance. He did not mass-produce humans as robots. This is

the problem as well! Sections of society value themselves and their skills better than others, and depending on their culture, look down upon others based on their superiority in that skill. At a time in the past, physical strength may have been the superior skill. In much of the world today, wealth is the consideration. These skill sets were also passed on as if they were birthrights. The son of a warrior became a warrior and the son of a nobleman, a nobleman.

At least in the *vedic* system the criterion for classification was the child's inherent ability. It had nothing to do with birth. It had everything to do with what the child was good at. Whatever classification was chosen was ok, since nothing was considered superior or inferior. An artisan who was a *śūdra* was as respected as a scholar who was a *brāhmaṇa* or a merchant who was a *vaiśya*.

Condemning the system and eliminating it will not solve the problem. By eliminating it, another system will be created, that's all. This has already happened in most parts of India. The son or daughter of a political leader is considered by birth to be the future leader of the country. This has democratic sanction. Does this system set that right?

I am not a *brāhmaṇa* by birth. Enlightened beings are beyond the *guṇas*, beyond classifications. I have no need for any system. Let me tell you this: I salute the *brāhmaṇas* of this *vedic* tradition who at the risk of their lives kept the *vedic* tradition alive for thousands of years.

One disciple, a *brāhmaṇa* by birth, criticized his *varṇa* based upon his understanding of what 'education' had taught him. I stopped him. I told him about the *brāhmaṇa* priests of Chidambaram in South India, who even today do not move out of the limits of their sacred township. Many thousand years ago this group swore to stay and protect the scriptures in their possession. As the world around them progressed and grew richer, they could have given up this noble, but monetarily low value occupation. In fact, it was a thankless occupation because the Tamil community had been in the forefront of denigrating the *vedic* culture in this country. That is the reason why you find the largest and wealthiest expatriate community in the USA to be Tamil *brāhmins* who could not survive in their homeland.

You have similar communities of *brāhmaṇa* scholars in Varanasi and other locations who kept *vedic* scholarship alive in spite of numerous handicaps. Without them, this country would have been ruined.

This is the reason why I salute the Indian community system.



I Am In Your Heart!

7.20 Those whose discrimination has been distorted by various desires, surrender unto deities.

They follow specific rules and regulations of worship according to their own nature.

7.21 I am in everyone's heart as the super soul.

As soon as one desires to worship some deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.

7.22 Endowed with such a faith, he endeavors to worship a particular demigod and obtains his desires;

In reality, these benefits are granted by Me alone.

7.23 Men of limited intelligence worship the demigods and their fruits are limited and temporary.

Those who worship the demigods go only to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees reach My supreme planet.

He says: I am in everyone's heart as the *Paramātmān* (super soul). As soon as one desires to worship a particular deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.

Please understand that when He says 'deity' or 'demigod', He doesn't mean the Supreme. Even if you approach Krishna out of fear or greed, you approach only a

demigod. When He says the word demigod, He means the attitude with which we approach the Divine; *how* we approach the Divine. With the right approach, even if you approach a demigod, he will be supreme! He will give you enlightenment. With the wrong approach, even if you approach Krishna, you will have only material benefits.

There's a beautiful story from Krishna's life.

A rich man prayed to Krishna to become a king. Twice a day, morning and evening he repeated, 'Krishna, Krishna.' He always asked Krishna thus, 'Krishna, please give me a kingdom. Krishna, I want to become a king.'

There was another poor lady, who had only one cow. With that milk she made a little butter and some sweets and offered it to Krishna. The whole day she sat and chanted Krishna's name.

Suddenly one day Krishna appeared and responded to both of them. This man, who had asked for a kingdom, became a king. And in the case of this lady who prayed everyday to Krishna, her cow died.

Narada asked Krishna, 'What is this, Krishna? That man who repeats your name only twice a day has been made a king by you. This lady who remembers you 24 hours a day, got deprived of her only cow. What is this? Is it fair?'

Krishna says, 'That man only wants the kingdom. He came to Me only for that. I am a utility to him. So I blessed him with what he wants. But for her, I was her whole life. There was only one small hindrance, only one thing that stood between her and Me, and that was the cow! I took that away. I removed that hindrance also. Now she has come to Me and completely become Me!'

Whatever our approach to the Divine is, it plays an important role in our spiritual progress. If we approach Krishna out of fear or greed, we worship a demigod. But Krishna says we are not wrong, but just that it is not enough. Krishna is not here to discourage us. Understand, nothing is wrong, but it is not enough. That is not the place to stop. It is a good place to have a visa, but not to have a green card or citizenship. Here, the planets or palaces of demigods are good places to visit, but not the right place to stay.

Krishna says, 'Because I am in everyone's heart as the super soul, the moment you desire to worship some demigod, I shall make your faith steady, so you can devote yourself to that particular deity.'

Let me describe how a seeker usually travels through all these paths and eventually reaches. When you start as a normal seeker, you hear about all kinds of rituals like *pūjā* (worship) and *homa* (fire ritual). You hear that a particular *pūjā* will give a certain benefit, and a particular *homa* will give some other benefit, and you starts doing these things. On friday, you fast for Devi (the divine mother), on saturday, you fast for Balaji (another name for Lord Vishnu), on sunday you fast for some other god, on monday you fast for Shiva, on tuesday for Skanda (another name for Lord Subrahmanya), on thursday for the guru (the master), and so on.

This is the way it starts. Then slowly, you not only go to all these *pūjās* and *homās*, you also go to many different temples.

After some time, you understand that these rituals and trips to the temples are too much. Then you think, 'Why let somebody else do these things for me? Let me directly do it and relate with the Divine.' You start your own shrine in your room of offering, in your own home. You engage in worship. This happens when you become a little mature. You think that you should feel directly connected to the Divine. 'Let me do it by myself,' you think. So you start doing it yourself.

The first grade in spirituality is going around visiting all the temples, watching all the types of offerings. The second grade is doing it yourself. The third grade is realizing, 'The Divine is there in all the gods, in all the forms. But I think I feel more attracted towards this one god, this particular god. So let me concentrate on worshipping the Divine in this form.' Having one form and offering only to that form is the third grade. The fourth grade happens when you think, 'More than these types of offerings, sounds imbued with energy is more powerful. Let me chant the sacred verses.'

Understand: surrendering through the body is *pūjā*; surrendering through words is chanting verses in praise of the Lord; surrendering through the mind is *jñāna* - wisdom or knowledge of the Self. So here you think, 'Why not chant the name of God?' You start repeating the name of your favorite deity.

At every level, different gods appeal to you; at every level, different gurus or masters appeal to you. When you are at the level of going to pilgrimage places, people who guide you to these pilgrimage centers appeal to you. When you go to Sabarimala (a famous pilgrimage spot in South India), you call the person who leads the trip *guru swami*. He appeals to you.

When you come to the level of *pūjā* and *homa*, other people who also do these rituals appeal to you! The person who teaches you *pūjā* appeals to you. He becomes your guru.

Next, when you come to the level of focussing and offering to only one deity, the deity becomes your guru.

Next, when you come to the level of chanting verses, the person who teaches you the verses appeals to you. He becomes your guru.

Next, after some time you think, 'Why only repeat this verse? Why not do some meditation?' Now the person who teaches you meditation appeals to you. Meditation is again *saguṇa brahman*, which means meditating on a form. This is the next grade.

So the first grade is attending rituals and visiting temples. The second grade is doing the rituals yourself. The third grade is concentrating on one deity, and offering only to that deity. The fourth grade is realizing that the verses are more powerful than rituals, and instead of performing rituals, you start chanting. The fifth grade is visualizing a form and meditating, instead of chanting. Then, when you sincerely meditate, He Himself appears. He gives you His *darśan* (vision) and guides you to the higher level of practice. He guides you to the right master. Sometimes He gives you *darśan* and guides you; sometimes He automatically makes you feel connected to your master.

Only a person who has come to this level can feel directly connected to an enlightened master. Till you reach this level, till this maturity happens, you cannot straightaway feel completely connected to an enlightened person.

You need to go through all five steps, only then will you feel completely connected to a living master. When you come to the stage where you meditate on a single form, the master happens in your life. He happens in your life and guides you.

The form upon which you meditate and your own form are expressions of the same divine energy. So the master puts you into real meditation. This means turning towards yourself, turning towards your own consciousness, turning towards your own being or soul. He gives you the technique to realize your being. This is the sixth level.

The seventh grade, the ultimate grade, is when you experience that *you are That*. You achieve enlightenment!

This is the usual route that seekers travel on, starting from the first grade, moving to the second grade, and ending with experiencing the Self. Now find out in which grade you are in and try to go to the next level. That's all. That is all you need to do.

Here Krishna says, 'Because I reside in everyone's heart as the super soul, when somebody desires to worship a demigod, I make his faith steady, so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.' When you approach the Divine even from the first level, He helps you. He helps you without doubt.

When you start, you are like 18 carat gold. There's nothing wrong with 18 carat gold, but you need to be put into the fire a little bit, and slowly, you become 22 carat gold. Then you reach the master, a living master. Then slowly you become 24 carat gold, and you become enlightened. If you throw away the first step, you never reach the second step. Unless you have gone through the earlier steps, it will be difficult to relate to a living master.

This morning, one man came to visit me and started speaking to me. He expressed his confusion. This happened after he had read many books. He said, 'I am now more confused than before.' In the Gita, Arjuna says the same thing. After a few chapters, he says, 'Oh Krishna, I am now more confused than before hearing the Gita!'

Understand, this clearly means that you have done your spiritual practice well! You really did your practice. Understanding that a particular practice is not helping you is the right help derived from the practice!

Buddha teaches meditation to one of his disciples. The disciple tries his best to meditate and comes back and says, 'Buddha, I am unable to meditate!' Then Buddha says, 'Don't worry. You have understood properly. That is the purpose of this meditation. Understanding that you are not able to meditate is the purpose of this meditation. You have done it. That meditation has served its purpose. Now forget about it and come to the next step.'

Sometimes these techniques make us mature by giving us the understanding that we are unable to do the technique. That understanding is a big maturity. There's nothing wrong in it.

Approaching the Divine in some form is the first step, or the first level. There's nothing wrong in that, but don't stop there. Here Krishna says, 'I make his faith steady, so that he can devote himself to that particular deity,' which means that he can grow in that particular attitude. There is the possibility of growth. He says, 'I

don't discourage him; I make his faith steady, so that he will slowly come up to higher levels.'

Krishna says, 'Even if you approach Me with an attitude of fear or greed, I fulfil your needs. It is My own energy which fulfils them, so that you grow, and you come up to the next level.'

If you receive boons through demigods, do not think that those deities are responsible for it. Do not think that the idols that you pray to are the ones who granted your prayers. All these are granted by the ultimate energy, the Existential energy. But you are not expected to stop with these boons. You are expected to grow further.

I always tell people, when you approach the Divine, first all your dreams will become reality. The divine will bless you. All your desires will be realized. Later on, the Divine will give you the understanding that the reality you perceive is itself a dream! First God gives the *śakti* (energy) to turn your dreams into reality. Then He gives the *buddhi* (intelligence) to realize that reality itself is a dream!

That is what He says here: When I bless you, according to your maturity and based on the way in which you approach the Divine, I give everything.

There are many educated individuals who question me about the wisdom of idol worship and rituals.

A small story.

A disciple was massaging Vivekananda's feet. A follower, a young student, came to Vivekananda, prostrated at his feet and said, 'I adore you. I adore you because you despise all these superstitions about idol worship and bathing in the Ganges. You are truly educated.'

Vivekananda roared at him, 'You fool, what do you know about my beliefs. I pray everyday to *Ma Kali* and bathe in the Ganges. Shed all your notions that worshipping idols is foolish and learn how to pray.'

Soon after, an elderly scholar came to Vivekananda and said, 'Master, you are the greatest. Whatever you have said about learning the scriptures and going to temples is so powerful. I wish everyone would talk like you do.'

Vivekananda said to him, 'What do you know about the scriptures? Is there any point in reading all this outdated material? It only makes your ego stronger. Stop this nonsense and meditate.'

After the scholar left, the shocked disciple massaging his feet asked Vivekananda, 'Master, I am confused. You have just reversed your position with these two people. What should I do?'

Vivekananda said, 'Just keep your mouth shut and massage my feet. That is good for you.'

When you go to a temple and worship an idol, when you are in the first grade, you might feel that you are praying to a stone or metal idol. As your awareness grows, you will realize that the idol is not just stone or metal; it is energy. Even without much effort, you will start feeling the energy inside the temple.

Why do you think thousands, no, millions of people, visit holy shrines in Tirupati or Varanasi or Tiruvannamalai? A few hundred people can be misled, but not millions, and that too without any coercion, without any enticement. They go because they feel relieved; not all of them go merely out of greed and fear. There are thousands who go because unknowingly they feel the hand of God, as it were. They feel the touch and they feel the 'energy connection'.

Hindus worship *through* the idols, not the idols themselves; our rituals address the energy behind these idols. Logic cannot make us understand this. Only faith can. We need to go through this stage of form worship before we realize the formless. Otherwise we will all be intellectual monsters. Religions that condemn idol worship without understanding the philosophy behind worship breed confusion that leads to destruction.

In every form of learning we need to advance step-by-step. Only if we are an exception can we be promoted to university education without attending high school. Such exceptions are rare, and prove the rule. When we consider idol worship foolish and meaningless, it only means that we are foolish and ignorant. The minute science advances and a scientist measures the energy vibration of our temples and proves that these are centers of energy, the same people will be queuing up at the temples. They are like cattle led by science, though they feel others are cattle led by religion and superstition.

It does not matter whether it is a Hindu temple, a Christian church, a Buddhist pagoda, a Muslim mosque or even a river or mountain. When thousands and millions of people congregate to celebrate the Divine and offer gratitude, any place becomes a temple, a place of worship. Every twelve years, tens of millions of people gather by the sacred river Ganga in India to celebrate *Kumbh Mela*. In certain years 100 million people have gathered on this occasion, in what is certainly the largest gathering in the world.

As these people bathe in the river with deep conviction, gratitude and prayers, the river gets purified and in turn purifies them. It is a deep bio-spiritual interaction that raises the energy of the planet and the universe.

When Krishna says, 'He goes to the planets of the demigods,' don't think there is some planet out there! He talks about space and experience. If we worship some god out of greed, we never come out of that greed. We will be continuously caught in greed. If we worship some god out of fear, we will be always in that fear. If we worship the Divine out of love and gratitude, we experience a totally different space.

Hell and heaven are not geographical; they are psychological. Depending on our particular mood, we create our own hell or heaven wherever we go. We all know how to create hell! Now all we need to know is how to create heaven. There's nothing that needs to be learnt about the art of creating hell. Now, it is time to learn how to create heaven.

He says: Men of small intelligence - people caught in greed or fear, attention-need or worry - worship the demigods. Of course, sometimes we worship the demigods; sometimes we approach Krishna or the ultimate God with the same attitude - the attitude of asking. If we carry the attitude of greed, whether we worship Kubera, the god who gives money, or Krishna, in effect we worship only a demigod. Even if we worship Krishna with that same attitude, we worship only a demigod. It is the attitude that makes Krishna either the ultimate god or a demigod. It is we who create the attitude. It is we who create the energy. By worshipping demigods, we attain demigods.

This is an important *sūtra*, a technique. It says:

*antavattu phalaṁ teṣāṁ tad bhavati alpamedhaśāṁ |
devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti mām api || 7.23*

It says that when we get boons from demigods, they are temporary. God will bless us with wealth when we ask Him. But we need intelligence to preserve it. We need intelligence to protect wealth. That alone we need to do. So be very clear, when we receive anything out of energy, without having the maturity to receive and sustain it, it is only temporary. If we have enough intelligence and maturity to have wealth, then naturally, we would have created it. Because we don't have *buddhi*, wisdom, we ask God to give us *śakti*, energy. If we get *śakti* without *buddhi*, it will only be temporary.

That is what Krishna says: If we get *śakti* without *buddhi*, it is temporary. It will not remain with us. That is why He says that boons derived from demigods are temporary, not permanent. And if we continue to worship them, we are stuck with them. We create that kind of energy in our inner space. We live with that kind of energy in our being.

He makes one more statement: *madbhaktā yānti mām api* - My devotees attain Me.

Then He says these words: If you approach Me with the ultimate attitude, with the attitude of love and gratitude, you achieve Me. The greatest attitude is gratitude. If you approach Me with gratitude, you experience Me.

Again and again people ask me, 'Swamiji, when I have so many problems, how can I be grateful?' Please be very clear, we continuously pray, 'Oh God, please give me a diamond ring.' Do we feel grateful that He gave us the finger to wear the ring? We don't feel grateful that He gave us the finger. Be very clear, the finger is not our birthright. There are thousands of people who don't have hands. There are thousands of people who don't have a finger. It's not our birthright.

We continuously pray intensely, in all possible ways, 'Oh God, give me this. Oh God, give me that.' But we never feel grateful for the things that are showered on us.

This very life is a blessing!

Can we say that our life has been given to us as payment for some job that we did in Vaikuntha (abode of Lord Vishnu) or Kailash (abode of Lord Shiva)? No! It's not as if we worked for 100 years in Kailash, and earned a check that says, 'Alright, have 70 years of life.' If we work in the army, they give us money to study. It's not like that; we did not get life as a salary. It's a pure blessing showered on us.

Every breath is a blessing! The breath that we inhale and exhale is a boon given to us. This very life is a blessing. Continuously we miss things that are not part of our possession. But we never experience the things that are showered on us by the Divine.

Each of us has a big list of things that God has not given us and we also have a big list of things that God has given us. If you take a paper and pen and start writing these lists, both lists will be endless. Every moment of our life is a gift from the Divine. We are alive, we are still conscious; that by itself is a gift from the Divine.

If we honestly list the things that are not given to us, it will be an endless, infinite list. If we earnestly make a list of the things given to us, that will also be an endless, infinite list.

Now it's up to us whether to look at the list of things not given to us and constantly feel miserable and live in hell, or look at the list of things showered on us and be in heaven. The second way makes us feel deeply grateful. It makes us say, 'Oh God! You have showered so much on me, and given me the blessing of life.' We feel grateful and create our heaven. It is up to us to create hell or heaven. It's purely our choice.

Krishna says, 'These men of small intelligence worship demigods. Their results are temporary.' We continue to live that way. When we feel life is a blessing and we approach the Divine with deep love and gratitude, not only do we experience divine consciousness, Krishna says: They achieve ME. They attain ME.

There's another verse where Krishna beautifully says: 'If you ask for something, I will give you that. If you don't ask for anything, I will give you Me.' People say, 'Who wants Him? We want Him only as a utility, not Him. As long as He serves our purpose, things are ok. So we don't want Him.' People want only solutions. They don't want the Divine.

Q: Many scriptures advise us to look inward. But to be successful in this world we need to look outward, at how things happen around us. How can we succeed by looking inward?

Man can live in two ways. He can live as an extrovert; then he can have the whole world, but he will miss himself. And to miss one's self is to miss everything. Unless man becomes rooted in his self, he has no future.

One can become a king, a political leader or a successful and rich businessman, but deep down one remains a beggar, utterly poor. Whatever you have, you crave for more, and you keep running, unable to stop.

The other way is to live an inward life. Man can live as an introvert; then man lives in his being. Then he lives rooted in his own self and a great richness arises because he is nourished from within!

It is from our inner core that we are joined to God, and if we live from our inner core we allow God to live through us. I am not against the world. I am only saying, be in the world but don't be of it, be in the world but remain above it, be in the world but remain transcendental to it. Remain a witness - that is the path to reaching the core.

All that is needed is a simple process: Sit inside yourself and watch. Let the mind do all its old tricks. Watch it non-judgmentally - neither labeling anything as good or bad, neither choosing nor rejecting, utterly indifferent, cool. Slowly, slowly, you will learn the trick of witnessing.

First the mind will try its old tricks and then, by and by, it will feel embarrassed because you are not getting affected in any way! Even if you feel against it, the mind is perfectly at ease because it has succeeded in disturbing you. So don't be against it, don't fight with it, and don't fall a victim to its tricks; remain aloof.

Many times you get involved with the mind. The moment you feel this, remember and pull yourself out, compose yourself, and again start watching. If a thought arises, see it. If it comes in front of you, just witness it. Then if it passes by, see that too. Just witness the coming, staying and going of thoughts. Take note of it, with no notion of whether it is good or bad, whether it should be or should not be - with no moral attitude, just a scientific, cool observation.

After a while, the mind will stop chattering. One day, suddenly it will not be there, and that day a silence will have descended upon you, a silence that you have never known before. That silence, that infinite silence will overwhelm you from all sides. It will never leave you. It will remain with you, it will become your very soul. It will be liberating.

And the path is, taking a jump from mind to no-mind. Mind can make you knowledgeable but never wise. No-mind will not make you knowledgeable, but it can make you wise. It is wisdom that brings freedom and it is wisdom that brings God to you. It is wisdom that brings immortality to you. Enter into the world of wisdom. The way is meditation.

This is not a process of fighting or forcing. It is a happening.

Let this be your foundation: Be friendly with Existence, outside and inside. Be friendly with everybody, including yourself, which is the hardest. People don't love themselves. That is the last thing they ever do. It is easy to love the enemy; it is

difficult to love yourself. You know yourself too well – how can you love yourself? But the person who can love himself can love all. Love yourself, and you are bound to love your enemies and everyone else. If you can love yourself you have fulfilled the basic condition of love, and out of that love arises peace. And peace is the door from which you start having your messages from God.

Beauty is an expression of God, in whatsoever form it appears. So this is the way that you have to seek and search for God. Start looking at Existence with this vision, with these eyes, and you will be surprised because you will see things you have never seen before. You would have been passing by the same things everyday: the same trees, the same birds and the same people. But once you have this vision, that all is divine, you will look at things in a new light. Then the world is no more a puzzle, no more a problem, no more a question - not a question to be solved but a mystery to be lived!

The moment you are empty of yourself, you are full of God. Remember that both cannot exist together. It is either you or God. And the foolish person chooses himself. Choose God: disappear as an ego. Forget yourself as a separate entity from Existence, and in that disappearance, you will be reborn.

It is a paradoxical state: the moment you are empty of yourself, you become full and overflowing! The ego is only a shadow; it has no substance. It is a dream, not reality. Drop the shadow so that you can attain the substance. Drop the false so that you can attain the real.

All that I teach here is how to be empty of yourself so that you can be full of God. That fullness is fulfilment.



No One Knows Me

*7.24 Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the supreme personality of Godhead, the **Bhagavān**, who was impersonal before, have become a human being now.*

They do not know that I am imperishable and supreme, even when I assume the body.

7.25 I am never revealed to the foolish and unintelligent, covered as I am by My divine power

The ignorant do not know Me, unborn and eternal.

7.26 O Arjuna, as the supreme personality of Godhead, I know all that has happened, all that is happening, and all that is to happen.

I also know all living entities; but no one knows Me.

7.27 O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of attachment and aversion.

Unintelligent men, who do not know my supreme, illimitable and immortal form, assume my illimitable form as manifested.

Here is another important verse. When He says earlier - My devotees achieve Me, attain Me - naturally Arjuna would have had the doubt: are you one more demigod? Naturally Arjuna would have had this obvious doubt.

So Krishna gives the explanation: 'Unintelligent men, who are not mature, think I am just this form. Only an intelligent man understands that I am immortal. Even

when I assume this form, I am that same consciousness. I have not become an ordinary human being by assuming a human form.' He declares His divinity openly. He declares, 'I am the same even when I assume a human form. Don't think I am one more demigod.'

He says, 'I am unborn, immortal, illimitable, even when I assume this form. Even when I assume this form, I am that same ultimate divine. I am not an ordinary man.' This is an important statement. This statement is made to declare His enlightenment and to express clearly and explicitly, 'I am enlightened. I am the embodiment of the ultimate consciousness.' The problem is that the person who is receiving this is not mature enough to recognize it as such.

People ask me again and again, 'Why is Krishna repeatedly declaring that He is enlightened?' That's a big problem. If you talk about something again and again, people tend to think that something is wrong with that.

There is a proverb in Tamil: If you wear a new ring, you always gesture with that hand because you continuously show it off. If you wear a new earring, what will you do? You shake your head to show it off!

If you speak about something again and again, there's something wrong with that thing. If you are clear about it, why should you speak about it again and again? This is how a spiritually immature person will misunderstand what is said.

Arjuna is approaching Krishna out of fear and greed. When the Gita started, Arjuna approached Krishna out of fear and depression, and also out of greed, with the 'What is beneficial for me?' attitude. He asked Krishna what would give maximum benefit, which is an expression of the attitude of greed.

Next he experiences fear. He is afraid of what will happen in the war. Fear and greed - that is the way he approaches Krishna. So initially even Arjuna sees Krishna as a demigod. At the initial level, Arjuna's approach is also as though it is towards a demigod. That is the reason why Krishna now declares His glory, or His true form.

He says, 'All types of people come to Me. I fulfil them at different levels, to encourage their faith and to help them grow. But only intelligent people understand, that even if I assume this body, I am the ultimate, I am enlightened. Unintelligent people think by seeing my body, by seeing my form, that I am not the Divine. So please be very clear: I am THAT.' He makes a clear statement again and again, so that Arjuna understands.

We need to understand two important issues here. First, the formless energy of Krishna defines His supremacy, His divinity, His Krishna consciousness. Second, in whatever form the formless is expressed, it is divine. It is the awareness of that divinity in Him that makes Krishna divine, the supreme master. If that awareness happens in you, you will be in Krishna consciousness, immersed in Him; and you will be divine too. The intelligence Krishna talks about is the intelligent awareness of one's own divinity, not merely that of Krishna. They are both one and the same. It is only when we are aware of our divinity that we appreciate the Divine.

I say to my disciples, 'Till you become enlightened, you will have no clear awareness of who I am. Till then you try to reach me only out of fear or greed, however slight it may be. It is only when you are enlightened and are in the same awareness as me, only when it is no longer necessary for you to fear me or desire through me, that you open up to me in sheer gratitude.'

That is the intelligence that Krishna speaks about. When that intelligence exhibits itself, when that awareness surfaces, then and only then true recognition of the Divine happens. That true recognition happens when you recognize the Divine within you.

Krishna asks: How can you recognize divinity when you are covered in ignorance? How can you recognize Me when you are not aware?

Out of the thousands who come to me, tens of thousands, the vast majority seeks favors of one kind or another. They come for the healing of the body and mind, or they come for repairing relationships, and for material benefits. Even those who do not look for material benefits may aspire to that intangible peace and bliss.

It is the rare person who comes without asking anything. It is not even seeking a benefit, tangible or intangible, that leads such people. It is an awareness of what they need to be and where they need to be. They are attracted like iron filings to a magnet. It is a call from their being which leads them to me.

In Mahabharata, the Indian epic, the Pandava princes could recognize the reality of Krishna. No one needed to coach them for it. On the other hand, their cousins the Kaurava for the most part denied Krishna. They rejected and ridiculed Him. Duryodhana, who was offered the first choice by Krishna to choose either Him unarmed or His Yadava army, chose the utilitarian army! That was all Duryodhana could see. That was his level of awareness, steeped as he was in ignorance.

Arjuna jumped at Krishna's offer. All Arjuna wanted was Krishna, His presence, not His army, not His divine powers, nothing else.

It is a choice that all of us need to make, whether we wish to be Duryodhana or Arjuna. It is not a difficult choice, as it will be determined by our being and our awareness. It will not be a choice at all. It will be a happening.

'No one knows Me,' says the master. How true!

'Don't take me for granted,' says Krishna. 'Do not put me in a frame for I shall not stay there,' He says.

Can you know Nature? Can you predict Nature? Each time you think you can, Nature does things differently. Then you say Nature is cruel, and ask why Nature is so cruel. Nature is Nature, not cruel, not kind, it just is.

So is Krishna. His compassion is not pity as we imagine. The compassion of the master is beyond our frames of time and space. So we cannot fathom what that means. When a tsunami kills a thousand people, we weep. When we pray and then win a lottery, we make a donation to the temple, very pleased. Divine compassion is not related to these. It is the truth that is beyond time and space.

Those who stay around me have experienced that whatever I say is the truth and it happens. They don't question me, not because they are afraid. What is there to be afraid of? What control can I have over them? They are free to leave any time they want. In fact, I tell them the only thing that causes me to pause is when a disciple leaves me, because then I have lost the chance to help him. So actually, they know enough to blackmail me if they wish to!

But they don't. Instead they do not question me when I am seemingly irrational, angry or inconsistent. They know the way enlightened beings flow. They recognize that and they simply follow.

They know that when I tell them something, it is not just a fact but the truth: truth that is not constrained by time and space.

Over two years ago when I went to the Himalayas with a group of disciples to the *cār dhām* pilgrimage centers, I had asked them to say to the local religious authorities that I am a *Mahāmaṇḍaleśwar*. This title is given to the leader of a very large religious organization. It is more than a title; it confers spiritual leadership, like being canonized as a saint. Without questioning, they announced that a *Mahāmaṇḍaleśwar* had arrived. As a matter of fact, no one

questioned them. They accepted the statement and gave the due respect when I visited the temples.

Recently in 2007, I was at the *Ardh Kumbh Mela* at Prayag in Northern India. It normally happens every 4 years. However this time the sacred river Ganga reversed Her direction, and this happens once in every 144 years. So it was more significant and 90 million people gathered for a dip in the holy river. I went with a large group of disciples.

In every *Kumbh Mela*, the first right to dip on the day of the royal bath is given to the naga sect, who are a special sect, and among them the Nirvani Akhada, the naked monks. During part of my wandering days before my self-realization, I had been with a group of these monks and they had accepted me as their own. Now at the *Kumbh Mela* they conferred upon me the title of *Mahāmaṇḍaleśwar* of their sect, just a few days prior to the day of the royal bath, and also gave the first right to enter the Ganga on that special day.

Amongst the disciples was one who was present two years earlier during the himalayan trip. He couldn't believe how the words he had heard from me were manifesting themselves now! He brought up the topic and I explained to him, it had nothing to do with what I had said. It is just the way Existence wants things to happen. What is spoken through enlightened beings is what Existence directs, and there can never be a contradiction in that.

The Truth is unpredictable because it is not bound by time and space as we know it. Truth cannot be known unless we are in truth ourselves. We cannot know Krishna unless we are in Krishna consciousness.

Krishna consciousness is not about going around chanting *Hare Krishna, Hare Krishna*. Such chanting, unless done with awareness, is of no real consequence; True Krishna consciousness needs no words. In fact, it has no words because the experience is beyond expression. One who experiences it does not express it.

Fear and greed are what drive us, says Krishna. That is our delusion. That is the delusion that leads us away from Him.

Attachment and aversion, *rāga* and *dveṣa*, form the duality, the polarity of human life. Even at the fundamental cellular level, biologists have shown that this tendency is exhibited. If you place a single cell in a Petridish and place a drop of nutrient, it is attracted to it and moves towards it. If you place a drop of toxin in

the same dish, the cell moves away from it. If on either side, you place drops of nutrient and toxin, the cell remains immobile.

At the cellular level, attraction aids in growth and aversion in survival. A cell can either grow or protect itself. At the multi-cellular level with higher intelligence, human beings act in the same way as the primary cell. They get attached to what they think is good for them and flee from what they think is not good.

Unfortunately, what works well at the cellular level does not work so well at the human level simply because humans have greater intelligence. Cells obey Nature and are directed by Nature to recognize instinctively what is good and what is bad. They also automatically accept the consequence.

Humans are different. They bypass signals from their body, refuse to accept what Nature tries to tell them and indulge in or avoid activities or objects based on their logic. Logic overriding Nature always leads to suffering.

Shedding attachment and aversion is the first step to awareness. Attachment and aversion are born out of our past; based on experiences and memories, what we call *saṃskāra* in Sanskrit. Based on these *saṃskāra*, we try to define our future. The problem is that these *saṃskāra* operate at an unconscious level and drive us from unawareness to unawareness.

Therefore, we end up acting instinctively, but unlike our cellular brethren, without listening to Nature.

Human beings are given intelligence so that they can rise above instinct and logic and operate out of intuition. This intuition is born from awareness. It comes through meditation. With awareness, we understand that there is truly nothing that we can be attached to, since everything is impermanent. As I said earlier, every moment of our life is a psychodrama.

The same is true of aversion. It arises from insecurity and fears. What is there to be afraid of in life? Every occasion that we are afraid, we actually die inside us. If we shed our fear of death, we lose all our fears.

When we move into awareness, through meditation, we settle within the boundary of our body-mind and we enter the present moment. When we are in the present moment there is no duality of like and dislike, attachment and aversion. We respond to each event as it unfolds with clarity, with intuitive intelligence, and we are always right.

Q: When I see your disciples, those who live in the ashram and those who follow you while living outside, I see a calmness that I envy. I hope I too can reach there.

Of course, you will. All you need is the decision. They say a disciple meets the master when the disciple is ready. That is true, because there are so many masters waiting; only the disciples are few!

Being in an ashram is different from being in a monastery. A monastery is about discipline. It is about rules and regulations. An ashram is about freedom. It is a space where you explore your personal freedom.

In our ashram establishments, we have guidelines, not rules. These guidelines assist in the control of your mind and senses, which is the purpose why you came to this place.

If you wish to enjoy sensory pleasures, you can go to many other places. It would be foolish to come to an ashram for that.

The starting point is a desire to know more about who you really are. You are not satisfied with whatever you are, whatever you have achieved. You start looking for what you think is your purpose in life. In truth, there is no purpose to your life. You are here to experience and enjoy what you experience, that is all. Instead, you look for meanings where there are none.

This search for meaning, this seeking for purpose, leads you to a master. You may be initially attracted to him intellectually. Later, you may be attracted to him emotionally. You start believing what he says. But as long as you are a day-tripper or weekend visitor, this relationship stops at the gates of the ashram or wherever you meet the master. Your normal worldly burdens overwhelm you the moment you are outside his sphere of influence. Out of sight becomes out of mind.

The ashram helps you link with people of similar needs and beliefs, and takes you to a deeper understanding of what the master and the master's teachings are about. Many of those who cannot move into an ashram environment, get together at least once a week in a gathering called a *satsaṅg*. A *satsaṅg* means a gathering of people in search of truth. The truth of the experience of all masters is the same; their expressions may be different.

At the level of the *satsaṅg*, at least once a week, they gather with people of similar intention and belief so that their search gets intensified. At the level of the

ashram, you make it more permanent. If you are so inclined, the process can be faster.

If your search is serious, you become sincere in what you do. You will not be able to be idle in the ashram. Many sleep only a few hours every night in the ashram. All you need is three to four hours of sleep every night to rejuvenate yourself. The problem is that you do not sleep; you toss and turn. When you learn to flow with your energy and the energy around you, you fall into deep sleep immediately when you lie down.

Ashrams are like a womb; they are energy centers. When you are in them, you are rejuvenated, refreshed and alive. You are awake in all senses of the term. The calmness that you perceive in the *ashramites* is the non-judgmental wakefulness that they live in.



No Sin, No Virtue

7.28 Persons who have acted virtuously, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of reality and unreality,

Engage themselves in My worship with firm resolve.

7.29 Persons who are striving for liberation from the cycle of birth, old age and death, take refuge in Me.

They are actually Brahman because they comprehend everything about activities that transcend these.

7.30 Those who know Me as the supreme Lord, as the governing principle of the material manifestation, who know Me as the one underlying all the demigods and as the one sustaining all sacrifices,

Can, with steadfast mind, understand and know Me, even at the time of death.

Krishna talks here about *pāpa* and *puṇya*, sinful and meritorious acts.

The concept of sin and merit itself is a delusion, one of duality. At the level of Krishna consciousness there is no *pāpa* or *puṇya*, no sin and no act of merit. All are the same.

Your immediate question will be, 'Can I do anything I want? Can I kill, maim, annihilate, and be a Hitler?'

When you reach Krishna consciousness you will not be a Hitler. It is impossible. At the level where you are now, it is necessary to follow some regulations because you still operate in duality. You operate from attachment and aversion. You act out of fear and greed.

Unfortunately, instead of these statements being guidelines for self-awareness as they were intended to be, they have become tools in the hands of institutions, whether religious, political or societal, to control us.

Thousands of years ago, great masters like Patanjali outlined prescriptions for Self-realization. In his Ashtanga yoga, Patanjali established practices of *yama* and *niyama*. These are internal and external regulations for your guidance, not for others to manipulate you with. These are milestones to guide your way. Once you reach the destination, you don't need the milestones; you don't need any regulations.

Every year, I take a group of disciples to the Himalayan mountains on a pilgrimage, and the first stop is Rishikesh, where the river Ganga is about to enter the plains. Here I make them take the *sanyās* vows prescribed in *yama*. It is for their protection and guidance. It is not to instil notions of sin and virtue.

These five vows are *satya*, *ahimsā*, *asteya*, *aparigraha* and *brahmacarya*. *Satya* is truth in thoughts, word and action; *ahimsā* is not harming anyone in thought, word and action; *asteya* is not coveting, not stealing what belongs to another; *aparigraha* is living with minimal needs; *brahmacarya* is living without fantasies. They take these vows after a dip in the sacred river Ganga and participate in a *vraja homa*, a fire ritual of purification. For the next two weeks they wear the saffron cloth that I give them.

These vows are for self-discipline and they lead one to awareness. No one needs to control us. Understand, as long as we need to look over our shoulder to see if someone is watching us, we are still living in hypocrisy.

Krishna addresses mortal beings here, in the form of Arjuna. So He talks about doing virtuous acts and avoiding sinful acts. What follows is more important. He says to go beyond duality, the duality of sin and virtue. This is only possible when we become aware. It is only when we become aware that we can reach Him.

In the verses of the famous Bhaja Govindam, Adi Shankaracharya says hauntingly,

*punarapī jananaṁ punarapī maraṇaṁ
punarapī jananī jatare śayanaṁ
iha samsāre bahu dustāre
kṛpayā pāre pāhi murāre*

Birth and death again and again; lying in a mother's womb again and again. This [ocean of] repeated birth and death is so difficult to cross. Please save me, O Krishna!

The greatest philosopher that Hinduism has known, prays to the greatest master that the universe has known, 'Save me from this endless cycle of *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death.'

To know that one needs to be saved from this cycle needs great wisdom. To seek the feet of the master who can lead you to that liberation needs great wisdom and awareness.

You can be born again and again and still think that you are being born for the first time, and that this is the only life that you have. This knowledge requires no wisdom. With this knowledge, you focus on this life and want to extract the maximum juice out of it. You run after everything possible, as if there is no tomorrow. You live in a fantasy world. You enact a psychodrama.

Please understand that this is not your only life. This body is not who you are. All this is temporary. What you chase is a dream. One day you will wake up and discover that this life is nothing but a dream.

You are more than this body and mind; you are above this body-mind. What you are endures after death. What you are returns after death. When you understand this cosmic truth, you are liberated. At some point in time, you do not wish to be part of this psychodrama anymore. You are bored. You ask, 'What for?' just as Shankara plaintively asks Krishna, 'Again and again, without end, I come and I go. Please save me from this useless journey; let me be with You.'

Buddha calls this cycle of birth and death a bondage. It is sorrow because it is not real. It is not the real you that dies and is reborn. The real you changes bodies as you change clothes.

Krishna ends this chapter with the prescription for how to know and understand Him and reach Him.

Even at the time of death, He says, even if all your life you lived a dissolute life, if at the point of departure you realize your folly, the futility of the psychodrama that you have enacted, that is enough to redeem you. The mere recognition of that can save you.

His compassion is unlimited. He promises: Knowing me at the time of death, even at the time of death, will lead you to Me.

Please understand, this is not easy, not so easy as it seems. If you have been ruled by greed, greed for power, wealth, possessions and all such material objects

throughout your life, nothing can change suddenly at the time of death. You will be full of the same fantasies that you were obsessed with throughout your life. Your last thoughts will be on those very same things.

A small story:

A recently bereaved widow went to a medium to contact her husband's spirit.

All she wanted to know was to who all he had lent money. She knew that he was a miser. He had died suddenly without leaving a record of what people owed him, and she knew he would suffer wherever he was if she did not do something about the collection.

Sure enough the medium responded, 'Our neighbor owes me a hundred dollars. The man living opposite our house borrowed five hundred dollars...' The list was long and went on for a while.

When the medium stopped, the widow asked, 'Is that all?'

The medium responded, 'Oh, I forgot. I owe Bill a thousand dollars.'

The widow hurriedly told the medium, 'I don't think this is my husband,' and she left the place!

We cannot change our nature at the last minute. Gandhi died with the name 'Hey Ram' on his lips when he was assassinated because Lord Rama's name permeated his whole being all his life. It could never have been otherwise.

If we want to die with the thought of the Divine uppermost in our mind, we must cultivate the habit of remembering Him now. We should start knowing Him today. We should start understanding Him today. Then and only then will we know and understand Him at the time of death.

Some may ask, 'What is the need to understand and know Krishna, whether at the point of death or before? If I do the right things in the right manner, why should it make any difference whether or not I understand and know Krishna?'

Please understand that Krishna is not talking about the physical Krishna, or even about the cosmic consciousness that He is. He speaks about our understanding and about knowing ourselves. Krishna talks about the need for us to understand who we are.

The ultimate master resides within us, not anywhere else. The external master, be He Krishna or Nithyananda, is a guide to make us understand, know and accept the master within us. Yes, it may be possible in rare cases for that wisdom to dawn on us at the point of death, but it is not common. Someone who constantly seeks that truth will continuously search for that master within, and has a better chance of making that connection, making that discovery earlier rather than later in life.

Krishna in His deep compassion says, 'Even if that happens at the point of death, I shall redeem you.' He does not want us to miss that chance, even if we have not thought about Him all our lives. He does not rule out the possibility, even if we have not been seeking all our lives. He wants us to discover the master within. Even if we do that at the point of our last breath, it is ok with Him.

So, let us pray to the Ultimate Krishna to give us the intelligence and awareness to realize the truth about ourselves, to give us this experience of eternal bliss - *nithya ananda*.

Q: Does being wealthy negate Self-realization? Most religions preach that we need to give up all that is material before we can become spiritual.

It is not necessary to be poor to become spiritual. One can be wealthy and spiritual but the attachment to wealth and the expectations of wealth need to be dropped.

In almost all cultures, a god or goddess is portrayed as the symbol of wealth, fortune and prosperity. These cultures believe that wealth is important not only in this realm where we live, but also in the spiritual realm. In Hindu mythology, Vishnu, the Sustainer, and His consort Lakshmi represent wealth and fortune. It is believed that when Shankara sang the praises of goddess Lakshmi in his Kanakadhara Stotram, gold coins fell through the roof of the hut of a poor *brāhmaṇa* who had fed him selflessly. Shankara had no need for wealth, yet he had no reservations about making a poor man wealthy.

Wealth and money are energy. Not only you, but many others can also benefit from your wealth. It is not the mere possession of wealth that causes problems, but your attitude to your wealth that matters. As long as you enjoy the wealth that you have and also allow others to benefit from it, you do a great spiritual service. You are of far greater value to the universe than someone who is poor.

However, when greed drives us into acquisition and more acquisition without the desire to enjoy that wealth, wealth becomes an addiction. Wealth consumes us, rather than we consuming wealth. We are no longer in control.

There have been great kings and wealthy men who were spiritually advanced. They did not allow the fantasy of wealth to touch them. They used wealth intelligently, and the very use of wealth without attachment brought them more wealth. That is the way the universe works. The universe is abundance. Any amount of wealth is possible from the universe. However, the universe does not respond to begging, arising from a mentality of emptiness. The universe responds to a call that arises from fulfilment. That is why fulfilment and gratitude beget wealth because fulfilment and gratitude are real richness!

Masters and religions have advocated giving up wealth. Please understand that they do not tell you to stay poor. They tell you to stay unattached to your wealth, that's all. When you are unattached to your wealth, whether you are wealthy or not, you are rich! If you are attached to your wealth, even if you are wealthy, you are actually poor.

For someone who has nothing, to pretend that he is renouncing wealth is foolish. His fantasies remain with him and haunt him, because his basic desires about wealth have not been fulfilled.

Wealth or lack of wealth by itself does not make one spiritual. It is one's attitude to wealth and the renunciation of fantasies about what one does not have that make one spiritual.

Q: Throughout this chapter and other chapters, Krishna talks about reaching Him for salvation. He suggests many methods. But none seem practical. Is He referring to a mere intellectual understanding of what He says or is there more to it? How does the mere acceptance of the truth that He is supreme and beyond the demigods liberate me?

This is a brilliant question!

Some years ago I told a group of disciples that they should remain around me only if they were serious about enlightenment. I told them to leave otherwise. I told them not to block the threshold with their dilemma. I told them, 'Either come in or get out.' Some were older and experienced meditators. I said jokingly that it

brings me a bad reputation when they say they have been long-time meditators, when nothing has happened to them. People would wonder if I was a real master!

Fortunately, Krishna is not in the physical body to suffer the same abuse, when people find that millions read Gita word by word, verse by verse, and yet remain in no better consciousness than when they started.

Many read Gita and claim that they understand what Krishna says. What they mean is that they understand that language into which the Gita they are reading has been translated, that's all.

A small story:

A businessman placed an advertisement for an executive fluent in French. A girl responded saying she was fluent in writing French, but could not read French. Intrigued, the businessman called her and gave her a test.

He played a French tape for half an hour as she industriously transcribed. He asked her what it was about. She gave him her note pad. He could not understand a word she had written.

Exasperated, he asked her, 'Please read what you have written.'

She said angrily, 'I already told you that I could only write French, I can't read it!'

This is how we understand the Gita also!

How can we even intellectually understand that Krishna is supreme? Forget the demigods, how can we even accept that He is greater than us? We are so full of our identity and ego, that even if a thousand Krishnas were to descend in front of us, we would ask them for their identification cards! We will recognize Krishna only if He comes in front of us in the mold and image of Him that we have stored in our minds!

Krishna must come to us in our image of Him. Then we will accept Him. Then we will accept Him as the Supreme and hang His picture on the wall. Everyday, Krishna comes to us in many forms. He comes to us in the form of every person we meet. We have no idea about all this. We decide whom we will accept and whom we will reject.

We cannot accept Krishna in parts and reject Him in parts. Either we accept Him totally or reject Him. We have to surrender to Him. We have to surrender our

identity to Him. We have to surrender to Him that foolish image that we have in our minds of Him.

When I told my disciples that they should either get enlightened or leave, they chorused, 'Of course we want to get enlightened. That is why we are here. But how? We need your help.'

So I said, 'All you have to do is surrender. It is that simple.'

They said, 'We have surrendered. We have accepted everything you say. What else do we need to do?'

Understand, surrender has three components. The first is intellectual surrender, which is the mental acceptance of what I say. You may have done that partially. Even that I am not sure of. When I say something that pleases you, you accept what I say. The moment I say something that displeases you, you feel disturbed.

Ok, even if I assume that you have intellectually surrendered as some of you may have, the next step is total emotional acceptance. Your heart must accept me. People often ask me how they can tell if I am their true master. I say, 'If I am your master, you can never forget me even for a moment.' Your heart will tell you that I am your master. You do not have to tie a knot in your handkerchief to remember me.

Even this acceptance is only partial. The final surrender is the surrender of the senses.

This is the surrender that happens when the mind is extinguished. This is the state when we drop our identity. We assume the identity of the master. We see what he sees; we see what he says he sees.

I told them, 'If I tell you that the white wall in front of you is black, and your eyes see a black wall, then and only then have you surrendered to me! Only then have you surrendered your identity.'

Meditation is a technique for surrendering one's identity. Throughout the Gita, Krishna suggests to Arjuna techniques (called *sūtra*) that lead to liberation. Combined with the understanding at the intellectual level (called *śāstra*), as well as through devotional acceptance of His glories through verses (called *stotra*), the Gita leads you through the path of surrender into liberation.

Dropping one's identity requires a deep understanding, acceptance and internalization of the merger of the Self, World and God. Simply put, we accept our divinity and become one with the Divine. This is what enlightenment is about.

In our various Life Bliss Programs, we teach techniques that lead you through this process of dropping your identity. In the first level course, LBP 1 or Ananda Spurana Program, we teach techniques that activate and energise your energy centers or *cakras*. The sixth *cakra* (the third eye or *ājñā cakra*) that lies between your eyebrows is the center that needs to be energised to remove your ego. Over a two-day program we take you through a journey of energizing the seven *cakras* in your body-mind energy system.

Once you unblock and energize the *ājñā cakra* and move on to the final gateway of the crown center, the *sahasrāra cakra* located at the top of your head, you drop all your discontent and surrender in gratitude to the universe. You accept your inner divinity and have a glimpse of that final integration.

The next level course, LBP 2 or Nithyananda Spurana Program, is a different journey through the energy layers that are part of your body-mind system. At each level you re-experience the emotion-laden memories that have conditioned you all through your life. This reliving relieves you and liberates you. At the end of the program you are reborn in a sense, liberated from the bondage of your emotions and conditioned memories that have captivated you all along.

At the next level, you can choose to be initiated into a meditation technique that helps you reach your innermost core. This meditation technique, called the *ānanda gandha* meditation or ‘fragrance of bliss’ meditation, helps you constantly discard embedded memories as they surface. This is a meditation technique that you can use any time or all the time, along with any activity you are engaged in. It anchors you to the present moment, and in the awareness of the present moment, no embedded memories can form in you. In this state, you don’t create further *karma* (unfulfilled actions) and your mindset of unfulfilled desires is extinguished. You are liberated.

The simple truth is that the present moment is Krishna consciousness. When we reach this state of being in the present moment, we reach Him and we are liberated. So it is not the mere intellectual understanding of what we read in the verses, but the internalization of what Krishna says, that can liberate us.

May you reach Krishna consciousness and realize eternal bliss, *nityānanda*!

Thus ends the seventh chapter named Jñānavijñāna Yogaḥ of the Upaniṣad of Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of yoga dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.

Bhagavad**Gita**

The Art of Leaving

CHAPTER 8

Death is our ultimate fear. Anyone who claims not to be
disturbed by the thought of death is only lying.
Nithyananda gives the answers to all the questions you
have been afraid of even to ask!



- ◆ *Swamiji, you say that death will instill discipline in a person. Are you referring to discipline based on fear? This type of discipline is the problem in most parts of the world.*
- ◆ *You say that merits acquired through good deeds, what we call **punya**, are also **karma**. Unless these too are eliminated we shall not be free. How can this be? We have been told all through our lives to lead good lives and perform good deeds so that we can acquire **punya** and go to heaven. Now you say that this is of no use!*
- ◆ *Swamiji, you said the Nithyananda Spurana Program or LBP 2 is based on your personal experience. Can you tell us more about this?*
- ◆ *Is there something called sin? What are **pāpa** and **punya**, sin and merit?*
- ◆ *You said that the mind is a collection of thoughts. If thoughtless awareness is to happen, this means that the mind must disappear. Normally, we look at the disappearance of the mind as death. Does this mean that when we experience **samādhi**, we die?*
- ◆ *Swamiji, you always tell us to celebrate the happiness, the blissful nature in us. Does it not contradict your saying that we should transcend joys as well?*
- ◆ *Can bringing in awareness about an engram dissolve the engram?*
- ◆ *Swamiji, you have spoken about the Life Bliss Program. Can you give more details about it and how it helps us in life?*



The Art Of Leaving

In this chapter, Krishna speaks about death. He gives us an insight into how death can become liberation and celebration. Death is the end of life as we understand it, as long as we don't understand it! The moment we understand it, it becomes a liberation and celebration.

Death is not the end of life, as we think. It is the climax of life. End is different from climax. The moment we think that death is the end, we wonder about it, trying to figure out what happens next. We create more trouble for ourselves. We worry about death the moment we think it is the end. Our lives become dull because of such worries. The shadow of death happens even when we live.

A man who is unable to understand death is like the living dead. A person who understands death will live even his death. A person who does not understand death dies even when he is alive. A person who understands death lives even when he dies. Death or life are not incidental, they depend on our intelligence. When we have clear intelligence, we live our death. When we don't know, when we do not have the clarity about death, we die even when we live.

The fear of death haunts everyone from birth. All religions sprang up from this one fear, this one question: Why do we die? What happens after we die? How can we escape death?

Each religion answers this question in its own way. Most religions answer in such a way that they can control us through the fear of death and the greed of escaping death. They talk about sins and merits and threaten us with hell and entice us with the promise of heaven. None of these really exists. There is no heaven or hell that any religion can threaten or entice us with. These are not physical locations or even metaphysical locations; they are merely states of our mind.

Death is not an end; it is a passage. It is a passage in a journey that continues. It is not a one-time event, as some religions seem to believe. We do not live and die once; we live again and again. As Krishna says, the undying spirit casts off bodies as one casts off garments and puts on new ones. The spirit within is immortal. The spirit within us is part of the cosmic energy and lives on, whereas the bodies that it assumes perish.

Enlightened masters of the *vedic* tradition experienced the state beyond life and death and have provided us with guidelines about how to achieve the same state. However, they expressed this to a select audience of disciples in a language coded for the understanding of those mature enough to work with that knowledge.

Here Krishna, the greatest of all enlightened masters, out of His infinite compassion, provides this knowledge in a form that anyone can understand. All one requires to imbibe this knowledge, is an open mind and the willingness to work sincerely and with dedication.

When we understand the art of living, the process of leaving becomes a celebration. When we understand that this life and the departure from this life is a single journey in a continuous cycle of birth and death, there is no urgency in living this life and there is no fear in leaving this life also. When we understand that what we do in this life and how we do it determines how we are reborn, we will have a far greater understanding of how to lead this life.

Arjuna starts here with questions:

8.1 Arjuna said:

*O my Lord, O supreme person, what is **Brahman**? What is the Self? What are result-based actions?*

What is this material manifestation? And what are the demigods? Please explain all this to me.

8.2 How does this Lord of sacrifice live in the body, and in which part does He live, O Madhusudhana?

How can those engaged in devotional service know You at the time of their death?

These are two beautiful questions! Of course, when I translate them into English, much of the taste is lost! That's the big problem with Sanskrit to English translation. We do not have the right words in English for many beautiful words

expressed by Arjuna. A single word has many meanings in Sanskrit. When we translate it, the whole juice is lost. The moment I translate, I give only one dimension, a single dimension of the verse.

An important thing we should understand about the Sanskrit language is that it is not only linguistic, but also has importance at the phonetic level. Just the vibration of the words can transform our whole inner space. The vibration is enough to transform our whole inner space. The sound changes the energy of the place and the inner space of those who hear it or are chanting it.

We should understand the concepts called *padā* and *padārtha*. For example, when I say the word 'cow,' immediately a figure appears in our mind – an animal with four legs, a tail, head and two horns. The word is called *padā*, the figure is *padārtha*. What happens in our mind when we hear the word is *padārtha*. In all languages the distance or gap between *padā* and *padārtha* is significant.

In Sanskrit the connection is immediate; the result is instantaneous. That is why I tell people to listen to Sanskrit devotional verses for at least 10 minutes a day. It does not matter whether you understand it or not. Just listen to any Sanskrit verse - whether it is Vishnu Sahasranama, Bhagavad Gita, Shiva Sahasranama or something else. Just listen at least 10 minutes every day. Even if you don't understand the meaning of the verses, the very energy of the vibrations will purify your body. Sanskrit has this capacity.

There is something called *śabda tattva*, the principle of sound. When air travels from our navel area to the throat, the *śabda tattva* changes the air into words. If this element is not there, only air comes out; no words come out. In other languages the more we use *śabda tattva*, the more tired we become. However in Sanskrit, the *śabda tattva* strengthens us. The more we chant, the more energetic we become! Every word strengthens the *śabda tattva*. It is like the generator automatically re-charging the battery and the battery running the generator. It is completely interconnected.

The Sanskrit language strengthens the *śabda tattva* that converts air into sound or words. This is why it does not matter whether or not we understand it. Listening to the sound, the very vibration, has an effect on our being. Modern day research proves that the vibrations of the verses have the effect of entering the body straightaway and removing impurities. This is why masters ask us to offer different types of worship which are the means to chant verses in Sanskrit. We simply heal ourselves.

Here, Arjuna asks beautifully, 'O Lord! What is *Brahman*? What is Self? What are result-based actions? What is this material manifestation? What are demi-gods? O Madhusudana! How do You live in the body, and how can those engaged in devotion, those who are practicing the eternal consciousness, know You at the time of death?' He continuously poses these questions.

I had seriously wondered how Arjuna, a *kṣatriya* (warrior) who ruled a kingdom, could ask the same questions again and again in different ways! Why does he ask the same questions again and again in different ways?

Yesterday I read a version of Mahabharata. That version says that Arjuna is also an embodiment of Krishna: the incarnation of *nara* and *Narayana*. These are two different energies of Lord Vishnu; one manifested as Arjuna and the other as Krishna. The whole drama happened so that the Gita took shape for humanity! Otherwise, even the disciple with the least consciousness would not have asked so many questions, again and again.

One thing we should understand is that when we have so many questions, we are not ready to wait for answers. We are not interested in answers. We are simply expressing our confusion. It is almost a catharsis. Here Arjuna asks so many questions. However, the main question to Krishna is: How does a person who is engaged in practicing Your teachings know You at the time of death?

Here starts the whole teaching of Krishna. He reveals the secrets of death.

One thing I want to tell you: The West has spent all its energy to understand life. The East has spent all its energy to understand death. Nobody has gone so deeply into, or achieved such deep experiences of death, as our *rṣis*, sages have. These masters have done a great service by bringing the knowledge of death to the people who are living.

People ask me, 'Swamiji, why should I know about death? Knowing about life is enough; after all I am still young.' The word 'death' creates fear in people. Many do not want to hear the word 'death'. They are ready to listen to any other subject. However, when it comes to death, they are not ready to listen. They think, 'Why should we know about death? If we know about life, it is enough.'

Please be very clear, our understanding about death impacts our understanding about life. Life and death are two sides of the same coin. Understand one thing: In the East, all religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, talk about many births or reincarnation. Most Western religions, as they are presented today, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, talk about a single birth.

This concept of reincarnation has influenced Indian society so deeply that nobody bothers about time! In India, people do not bother about time. They are so relaxed. Till 10 o'clock in the morning, people sit in teashops! If we ask for anything, they say, 'Not today, tomorrow; if not tomorrow, next birth!' They have eternity in front of them because somewhere they know they will come again. They are in no hurry and therefore do not run behind anything. Indian people are utterly and completely relaxed.

In the West, whatever they desire to achieve, they must finish achieving within 75 to 80 years. They do not have time. They either live now or never because there is only birth according to them. That is the reason why people run and run!

Please be very clear: Our understanding about death influences our whole social structure. Our whole thinking system, our whole mentality can be transformed with the right understanding about death. I gave a single example about how the idea of reincarnation influences Eastern society and how the idea of one birth influences Western society. Thousands of such examples can be given.

The idea and understanding of death is much more important than the understanding of life. Whether we understand life or not, it remains the same. But the moment we understand death, the whole quality of life changes and the whole quality of our consciousness changes.

The moment we realize the truth of death, if we experience even an intellectual understanding of death, it is enough to transform our whole way of thinking. That is why the moment we think of Yama, god of death, our whole life has *yama*, or discipline. The Sanskrit word *yama* means both 'death' and 'discipline'. We use the same word for both. For your convenience, I pronounce it a little differently; yet the spelling is the same.

The first technique of sage Patanjali in his work - Yoga Sutra, is *yama*. In Patanjali's treatise on Ashtanga Yoga, the eight limbs of yoga are *yama*, *niyama*, *āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhāra*, *dhāraṇa*, *dhyāna* and *samādhi*. In this, the first part is *yama*. And death is also *yama*. If we understand death, our whole life will be automatically disciplined. A strange but honest discipline will happen in our life.

Why do I say 'strange but honest?' It is because discipline as we know it is hypocrisy. But the discipline that is *yama* is a new kind of discipline, which is strange yet totally honest. Why do I say 'strange'?

Yesterday a person asked me a question. He is well read in Bhagavatam, the Hindu epic that describes the incarnations of Vishnu and especially His incarnation as Krishna. He asked, 'Swamiji, Krishna is enlightened and He was a *brahmacāri*, celibate; but He made love to Kubja. How is that possible?'

The name Kubja can be found if we read Bhagavatam very deeply. She is supposed to have been the maidservant of Krishna. Somebody who had read Bhagavatam very deeply asked this question.

What he said was true. There is a record in Bhagavatam that Krishna lived with Kubja. We need to understand that *brahmacarya* does not mean celibacy. I have not said that Krishna is celibate. I said Krishna is in the consciousness of *Brahman*. Here we translate the word '*brahmacarya*' to mean celibate. The moment we translate it, the meaning is lost. Krishna's inner space was totally pure, untouched.

Let me tell you a small story:

Once Vyasa, the ancient sage of India attended a function. After having a feast at the function, on his way back, he came to a river which he had to cross in order to reach his ashram, his monastery. He stood before the river and said, 'If I am sincere in my *ekādasi* fasting, let this river give way so that I may cross over.' *Ekādasi* refers to the eleventh day of the moon's cycle when normally people fast.

The moment Vyasa uttered those words, the river gave way. Vyasa crossed it followed by his devotees and they reached the ashram.

The devotees were astonished and asked, 'What is this? You enjoyed a feast just a few hours back. Yet, when you asked the river to give way on the condition that you have been sincere in your *ekādasi* fast, the river gave way! How can this be?'

Vyasa replied, 'When you eat with the consciousness that you are not the body, you never feel that you are touched by food. You never feel that you are eating, digesting, living. The body ate; I do not know anything about it.'

Of course, it is difficult to understand this concept. We can easily cheat ourselves with this idea. The problem with all great truths is, there is the danger of our misusing and abusing them. Take atomic energy; we can use it for good purposes, to serve the whole of humanity. Or we can destroy, we can abuse humanity with that same energy. We can use it or abuse it. This truth is like atomic energy; we can use it or abuse it.

People ask me, 'How can I find out whether I am living in the out-of-body-consciousness or not; how can I live like Vyasa?' Please be very clear, when we reach the state of Vyasa, we will not have this question. Vyasa says he is fasting after having eaten a feast because he does not feel connected to his body. He does not feel that his body is related to him. He is untouched. His inner space is so pure and filled with bliss, nothing touches him.

If we read Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life, we will know that he did different kinds of spiritual practices. As far as I know, Ramakrishna is the only master who has performed so much penance, so many different kinds of spiritual practices. Among these, he also practiced *tantra sādhana*, which aims at harnessing and transforming our powerful sensual energies as a means to enlightenment. One cannot imagine an ordinary person doing them. An ordinary person straightaway falls if he does *tantra sādhana*.

The greatness of Ramakrishna was that his inner space was never touched. He was never touched by outer things. His inner space was so pure and filled with bliss that he completed *tantra sādhana* successfully. *Tantra sādhana* is supposed to be done with many conditions, yet he achieved and successfully completed it because his inner space was pure.

Going back to the question, 'How can you say that Krishna is a *brahmacārī*?' Please understand that His inner space was so pure that He was never touched by body consciousness. He never experienced that He had a body and He never came down to body consciousness.

Let me tell you one more thing: It is not easy to live with so many women as he did, and yet survive! If we start living, then we will understand. When I say women, I mean men also. When a single man or woman enters our life, we understand how difficult it is to adjust and live. The other person seems to naturally create hell for us. When the other person enters our life, by their very quality hell seems to be created. Here we see somebody living with many persons, and yet remaining blissful. This shows that His inner space was never touched. His inner space was pure and radiating bliss.

The person whose inner space is filled with bliss will never be touched by any impurity. Of course, it is a difficult concept to understand. However, the moment we understand the depth of it, we will understand this concept.

A small story:

A *sanyāsi* (monk) goes to the Indian king Janaka who is supposed to be an enlightened king and one who enjoyed both the material world and spiritual enlightenment. The *sanyāsi* questions him, 'How can you say you are enlightened when you enjoy the benefits of worldly life?'

Sanyāsis are jealous of people who enjoy life! If you experience bliss within you and consciously leave the world to enter monastic life, you will never feel jealous. If you have escaped from the outer world thinking that you will find something worthwhile in the inner world, and there too the experience has not been solid, you start wondering what to do. You have neither the inner space of bliss nor the outer possessions. You are stuck.

So how do such people console themselves? They abuse and disrespect householders! They say to them, 'You people are not doing things properly. You are too attached to everything. You are not doing this, you are not doing that....' That is why from time immemorial, people who took the *sanyāsi* life condemn the householder's life. Have you seen a householder jealous of a *swami*? You will never find one. Yet I have seen hundreds of people who took *sanyās* who are jealous of householders because they feel something is missing in their own lives.

So this *sanyāsi* asked Janaka, 'How can you say you are enlightened and have both material and spiritual enjoyments?' Janaka said, 'Please stay in my palace for a few days. I will talk to you after that. Right now I am busy, a party is going on, with lots of music and dance, so I cannot talk about philosophical things now!'

Accordingly, arrangements were made for the *sanyāsi's* food and stay. However, above his bed a sharp knife hung, suspended on a thin thread. The *sanyāsi* asked, 'Why do you hang this knife exactly over my head?' The palace workers said, 'We do not know, but these are our king's orders. You must sleep here.'

Throughout the night the *sanyāsi* sat up, awake, thinking when the knife might fall on him.

The next morning Janaka asked, 'O *swami*! How are you today? Did you sleep well?'

The *sanyāsi* said, 'You know what you have done! Why do you then ask? How can I sleep when a knife hangs over my head? How can I think of sleeping?'

Janaka laughs and says, 'When death is in front of you, you cannot do anything; your whole life changes. However, although I know death is in front of me, I am unaffected. I know that the knife hangs over me, yet my whole consciousness lives in an unaffected way in this palace. That is the difference. Just because of one knife you are unable to enjoy the beautiful bed and all these luxuries. You are not able to sleep because of one knife! Yet even though all these things are there externally, my inner Self is not touched. My inner Self is pure because I know clearly that at any moment death can happen. Death is hanging in front of me. Because I live with this moment-to-moment awareness of death, I enjoy the material world fully without getting caught in it.'

That is why I said, 'Yama can make a strange, yet honest *yama* in your life. Death can instill a strange but honest discipline in your life.'

Understand death, intellectually. Your whole thinking will change. Your whole way of living will be transformed. You need not leave this place as the same person. Your being can be transformed. Your core can be touched.

Krishna starts with the secrets. He explains the secrets of death.

Q: Swamiji, you say that death will instill discipline in a person. Are you referring to discipline based on fear? This type of discipline is the problem in most parts of the world.

No, it is the opposite. No discipline based on greed or fear works in the long term. That is why many religions are incapable of guiding people on the spiritual path.

Religions that deny the immortality of the spirit and the concept of rebirth try to control you based on fear or greed. They tell you that if you follow their teachings, you are a good person. If you break their regulations, you are a bad person.

A good person goes to heaven. A bad person goes to hell. This may have no basis in their scriptures, yet those who control the religion use such tactics to motivate people to follow their religion.

Heaven and hell, as I said, exist only in our minds. People behave badly because they are already in hell within themselves. Their state of mind is the state of hell. They do not need to do anything further to travel to hell.

The discipline of *yama* happens within us once we understand that our thoughts, words and actions result in behavior patterns that ultimately cause us to either elevate or depress ourselves in this life as well as in the life hereafter.

Yama is not discipline born out of fear or greed. *Yama* is a set of guidelines that lead us to Self-realization. These guidelines cannot be enforced; they need to be understood, internalized, imbibed and practiced. Otherwise there will be no difference between these guidelines and religious commandments.

When a person practices *satya*, truth in thoughts, words and action, he or she needs to do it for the liberation that it produces within them. When we are steeped in the truth, we have no need to filter words and thoughts. As of now, all of us must be careful about what we say to whom, when and how. We must measure our words and be politically and socially correct in whatever we say. Otherwise we can get into serious trouble.

This is because we are not in the habit of speaking the truth. We filter thoughts and words to ensure that what we speak does not offend the other. If however, we decide that whatever we speak will be the truth and nothing but the truth, irrespective of what the reaction and consequences may be, we have no reason to hesitate and filter words.

Please understand: When we practice the truth, we automatically practice *ahimsā*, non-violence, the second of the five *yama* guidelines. Our truth never hurts or harms anybody. Our inner space is so clean that we have no negativities. Whatever thoughts come up are compassionate and full of empathy. A truthful person can never be offensive and harmful.

Each of the five *yama* guidelines overlaps and supplements the other. They can never be contradictory. Once we follow the path of truth, we are naturally considerate to others and do not covet what they have. Truth leads us to the understanding that we need to live within our means and not be consumed by greed and wants. Truth leads us into *brahmacarya*, living in reality. It is that simple. This discipline that I speak about removes the fear of death. This discipline brings us into awareness. Awareness of what, you may ask.

When we came into this world, what did we come with? We came naked, helpless, crying, longing to be taken care of, is it not? How do we imagine we will

leave this world? We will again be leaving without anything. No one should be foolish enough to believe that he carries his possessions with him.

Alexander, the Greek conqueror, had one request before he died. He said, 'When my body is carried through the streets in the funeral procession, please let my empty hands remain visible to all, so that people see that even the great Alexander could not carry anything with him when he died.'

When the understanding happens within us that we came with nothing and we will go with nothing, when that understanding is internalized, we no longer have the desire to possess anything. We lose the desire to acquire, possess and be richer and more powerful than the next person. None of it makes sense when we know that we leave empty-handed.

Enjoy what you have, but do not hoard. Be in the present moment and be joyful. This is the discipline that a true understanding of death brings to us.

Then there will be no fear because death is a certainty. There will be no fear because death is just a rite of passage. It is another stage in our life, like birth, childhood, middle age and old age. There is no greed that drives us to extract the maximum juice out of life in this birth. There is no blind fear that if we do not achieve in this birth, we don't have a second chance. We know that our spirit is eternal and that there is no hurry.

This is why, only when we know how to die, can we truly know how to live. Accepting death without fear or greed allows us to live without fear and greed. This discipline liberates us. No religion, no society can control us with rules and regulations. We regulate ourselves with our own awareness.

This is why religions and society fear people who face death without fear. These regulatory authorities have no control over us once we lose the fear of death. It is by manipulating this fear, the fear of death and the fear of losing our identity, that they keep their hold on us. Once that hold is broken, they have no control over us and we are free.



Your Last Memory Follows You In Your Next Birth

8.3 Bhagavan said:

*The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called **Brahman** and His eternal nature is called the Self.*

*Actions pertaining to the development of the material bodies is called **karma**, or result based activities.*

8.4 Physical nature is known to be endlessly changing.

The universe is the cosmic form of the supreme Lord, and I am that Lord represented as the super soul, dwelling in the heart of every being that dwells in a body.

8.5 Whoever, at the time of death, quits his body remembering Me alone, attains My nature immediately.

Of this there is no doubt.

8.6 Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body,

It is that state one will attain without fail.

Before going into what happens at the time of death, let us understand how we assume the body, how we live through it and how we leave it. Please understand that we create our whole body out of our fear, greed, guilt and our engraved memories (*saṁskāras*). Whatever *saṁskāras* we have, we create the body to work them out, experience them and enjoy them. The body is created according to our *saṁskāras*.

The problem is that once we have created the body and live our life, we do not live out only the *saṁskāras* that created this body. We acquire more *saṁskāras*. For

example, we take \$10,000 and go downtown to buy things that we need. On the way, we meet a friend. He says, 'Let us go to Universal Studios' , 'Let us go to Disneyland.' We go here and there and blow up all the money. Finally, when we go downtown to buy what we need, we are broke. Now the next thing available is the credit card. With the credit card we buy what we want to buy, come back and live our life just to pay credit card bills.

Actually the credit card is a cunning technique to make us run continuously. Of course, let us not talk about that now; it is a separate subject! We will talk about it when we discuss desires, *icchā śakti* or the energy of desires.

Returning to the story, now we come back home and suddenly feel we do not have sufficient things. Had we bought whatever we originally wanted for \$10,000, we would not have this problem. But we saw a friend and accumulated his desires also. Please understand that we have fulfilled his desires through our body. We have worked out and fulfilled his desires, not ours. We have used our time, money and energy and but we never got what we desired, what we needed. After doing this, we feel that we do not have enough money, energy and things to manage the situations of our own life.

In the same way, when we came down to planet earth, we came with enough energy to work out our *saṁskāras*. That is what the enlightened Jain master Mahavira means when he says, 'God never sends you empty handed.' He sends us with everything. Whatever *saṁskāras* or desires we bring, we bring enough energy to live them out also.

Karma refers to the unfulfilled desires that we create over many births, which pull us back again to take birth and fulfill them. We have three types of *karma* - *sañcita*, *prārabdha* and *āgāmya*. *Sañcita karma* is our complete bank of unfulfilled *karmas* like our safety deposit or the files archived in our office vault. *Prārabdha karma* are those *karmas* that we have brought and come in this life, like files in filing cabinets which we access and work on regularly. *Āgāmya karma* are like the new files on our table that we keep creating - new *karma* that we create in every life. We must exhaust all three types of *karmas* to experience enlightenment. *Sañcita karma* is all that we have accumulated over many births. *Prārabdha karma* is *karma* that we brought with us to work out in this life. *Āgāmya karma* is what we acquire newly in this birth.

Prārabdha karma is like our opening bank balance in this life. We have enough energy to exhaust this *prārabdha karma*. Then why do we feel that this life is not sufficient? Why do we feel unfulfilled?

The problem is that after coming down, we forget what we came down for, the *saṁskāras* and desires that we brought to live out, and we accumulate more and more desires from family, friends and society. We accumulate desires from others in society and work out *their* desires in *our* life.

For example, if our neighbor wears a new *sari*... I mean in India... in America, we do not even know who our neighbor is! A devotee in Oklahoma told me that his neighbor passed away and he came to know of it only six months later! The Indian lifestyle is different. Anyway, when our neighbor gets a new *sari*, we think, 'I should also get one.' We try to work out her desire. Naturally we run short of money, we run short of energy, we run short of time, we run short of everything.

When we live out others' desires in our life, we feel deeply discontented, because the energy that we brought with us will become insufficient. If we go downtown with a plan and a particular amount of money and suddenly our plan changes, naturally we run short. After coming down to planet earth, we forget what *saṁskāras* we brought and we collect more and more desires from society.

So much social conditioning happens through advertisements. Please be very clear, all advertisements make us poor. The advertisers become rich, no doubt, but we become poor. Ideas are continuously put into our head, especially advertisements that touch the *mūlādhāra*, the root *cakra*, the sex energy center. Advertisement agencies know that whatever touches the *mūlādhāra* is automatically recorded in our system; anything related to sex appeal is recorded in our system.

That is why whether it is soap or shampoo or clothes or cars, it is promoted with the undertones of sex appeal, because it straightaway gets recorded in our system. We automatically ask for that product when we shop. Yet we forget one thing: when we pay \$2, we get only the soap and not the model who was using the soap in the advertisement! We forget the important fact that we do not get the model along with the soap. But when it was recorded, both the soap and the model are recorded together in our system; but we forget that we get only the soap.

Whatever is recorded in the *mūlādhāra* energy center is so deep that we unconsciously act in accordance with it. So whatever is put into our being through advertisements naturally creates more and more trouble for us.

Please be very clear, as long as we fulfill our own desires, it is fine. However, when we live out others' desires, the problem starts. In the next verse, Krishna goes slightly deeper into this.

Krishna says here, 'O best of embodied beings! The physical nature that is constantly changing is called *ādibhūta* or the universal form of the Lord, which includes all the demi-gods. For example, the nature of the Sun and Moon is *ādidaiva*. As the supreme Lord represented as the super soul in the heart of every embodied being, I am called *ādiyagna*.'

We have seen how we are ruled by our desires at every step. Please understand: This gives us a background against which to understand the secret of death. When we understand why we take birth, it is easier to understand what happens when we leave the body. We will see the secrets of death in the next verse. Here Krishna throws light on the physical matter in front of us. If we deeply understand this, our desire to 'possess' automatically drops.

Let us take this chair you are sitting on. To our knowledge, there is some solid object placed at this location. However, if we go one level deeper, we see that this solid plastic can be broken down into many particles that make up this plastic. Now if we go one step further, we see that there are atoms and molecules. We can keep dividing into smaller and smaller particles and there is no end to it. And more than ninety percent of the volume within each particle is empty space.

Modern science has proven that matter and energy are mutually convertible. You see, this solid object that our eye sees is not solid. It is pure energy. This physical matter is energy and it constantly changes because of the fluid nature of energy. That is what Krishna says:

adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ

This physical or material nature constantly changes. Understand, because of the fluid nature of energy, it constantly moves; it changes. Change is the only certain thing. That is why everything around is temporary. We think something is permanent and hence we try to possess it.

Everything that we call matter is energy and it constantly changes. This truth was given by inner scientists or *ṛṣis* thousands of years ago. Krishna clearly says it. And we find this truth declared not just in Gita. We find similar statements in the *Upaniṣads* also. All physical matter is energy and it keeps changing.

In the last verse, we talked about our desires. Why do we run behind materialistic desires? Why do we constantly operate from the *mūlādhāra cakra*? It is because we do not have a good understanding about the physical world. We do not have a clear understanding of matter. If we understand this verse, we will understand the futility of running after the fulfillment of material desires.

When we look at something, we think of it as only matter. We think of it as a physical object. We think we can possess it. We think we can keep it with us. We take ownership of that physical object. This is where the problem lies. Our ego sees the material world as only matter, and it asks for more and more of it to keep under its control. We want control over as many things as possible.

We fail to understand one important thing. We fail to see that it is all energy and energy cannot be kept in one place. Please be clear that energy cannot be kept in one place. It is universal. The physical object that we see is a manifestation of the universal energy. Please understand this clearly.

There is a wonderful movie called *What the Bleep Do We Know?* If you get a chance, please watch this movie. It talks about Probability Theory. We see this chair here because our mind wants to see it here. Yet there is every possibility that this chair may not be present here. We see it here because our mind creates a high probability for its presence here. There are energy waves and these waves manifest as physical matter. When we understand this, we can understand the futility of holding onto something or running after something.

One more thing, not only with inanimate objects is this our pattern, but with people as well. We are continuously looking for a partner, friend, wife, husband or child to possess. When we have someone, we hold onto that person. We do not want that person to leave. If that person leaves, we feel terrible. When a close family member passes away, we feel depressed. Why?

It is because we hold onto them as if they are physical matter. They are like any other possession, like the television, refrigerator, car and air conditioner. If our car meets with an accident, we feel sad. We feel that we have lost something. In exactly the same way, when someone passes away, we feel that part of us is lost. We feel depressed.

I do not say that we should be insensitive to relationships. I mean we should stop being possessive. Understand that everything and everyone is created out of the same underlying energy. Krishna says clearly in this verse: Everything, whether living or non-living, is an embodiment of the supreme soul. The same supreme soul lives in everything. When we understand this, we see the truth that we are a part of everything around us. There is no difference between you and me. There is no difference between this chair and me. There is no difference between that tree and me. We see ourselves in everything.

When we understand this great truth, a new dimension of ourselves is revealed to us. When we see ourselves in everything around us, our compassion towards

everything grows a thousandfold. By being compassionate to others, we are being compassionate to ourselves because everything is one. Please understand this great truth. This changes the way we look at everything around us. This completely changes the way we perceive our desires, our fantasies. Krishna answers all the questions with a single *sūtra*, a single technique.

Now we enter the main subject. Here, Krishna reveals the secrets of death.

He says, 'Whoever dies remembering Me alone at the time of death will attain Me at once.' What does He mean when He says, 'remembering Me alone?' He says, 'Whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.'

Why should He say the words *nāstyatra samśayah*? Why should He say, 'there is no doubt?' He emphasizes, 'this is the truth.' He takes an oath.

We have a meditation program lasting two days on this *sūtra*, called Nithyananda Spurana Program. In India we conduct it for four days; here I do it as a two-day program because people are unable to take 4 days off. Here, in America, even if God comes, He must come on the weekend! Otherwise people will say, 'Please give me your card or email me; I will get back to you.' If He comes on days other than the weekend, He gets only email ids!

The whole program is based on this single verse. Before starting the camp, before starting the discourse on death, I always take the oath, 'I hereby state that whatever I say is the truth,' because there are some truths that cannot be logically expressed. They cannot be explained using logic that you understand. You need a little patience to listen.

The big problem with our mind is that we question, refute or straightaway don't want to listen to anything not presented in a logical form. Otherwise, we hear it as one more story. It will not go into our being. We think, 'Anyhow, I have come all the way, let me sit and hear what he has to say.' We allow the speaker to speak; however, we do not listen.

That is why, before I talk about death, I say, 'Hereby I promise that whatever I am going to say is pure truth. If you are interested, take it, digest it and transform your life. If you are not, it is ok; it is up to you; it is your choice.'

Krishna says *nāstyatra samśayah*, because He is going to speak something that is beyond logic. When we want to understand the outer world, we need logic. When

we want to know about the inner world, we need a master who takes us beyond logic. Logic gives us the outer world; it cannot give us the inner world.

Here Krishna says *nāstyatra saṁśayaḥ*: Have no doubt, what I am speaking is the truth. Please wait. Let Me finish the calculation, then you will understand. For now assume that X equals 2.' At the end of the calculation, you agree that X should be substituted with 2, but at the start, you need to believe the master's word and patiently wait until he works it out and shows you.

Until you realize it, till it becomes an experience, for a few minutes you need to accept the master's word as it is. When you finish the calculation, naturally it becomes your understanding. It starts as my understanding. In the end, it becomes your understanding. When it becomes your understanding, you naturally see the truth behind the words.

So Krishna says:

'Whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone, at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt.'

Why? Why does He say, 'remembering Me?' and that too 'alone?'

In Mahabharata there are at least 100,000 stories. One story goes like this:

There was a king who lived for a hundred years. Then Yama, the god of death comes and tells him, 'Your life is over, O King, come now, it is time, let us go.' The king says, 'What is this? You gave me such a beautiful kingdom, such a beautiful life, such wonderful wives, kids; you have given me everything. 100 years is too short to enjoy this life. Please bless me with 100 more years.'

Yama explains that no extension is possible. The king continues to plead, 'No, please bless me with another 100 years.' Yama says, 'Alright, if one of your sons gives his life, I will extend yours as an exchange offer.' Somehow one son agrees to give his life for his father and the king gets 100 more years.

After 100 years when Yama appears again, the king does not realize that his time is up and says, 'What is this? I asked for 100 years and you have come so soon.' Yama tells him that 100 years are over. The king pleads again, 'Please help me somehow; I did not realize that 100 years are gone. Please give one more extension.' Yama tells him it is too much and that a second extension is not possible. However the king begs Yama to let him live a few more years. Finally he gets one more extension.

The next time when Yama comes, again the king is in the same mood. Now Yama gives a beautiful teaching. He says, 'By pouring oil on it, you can never put out the fire. Now it is time, you must come.' The king understands and follows Yama.

In the same way, by chasing our desires, we can never feel fulfilled. Only more desires will come up.

By fulfilling our desires, we can never hope to have contentment. When we acquire more and more desires from the outer world, we naturally feel that life is not sufficient, that we had not been given time or resources to fulfill these desires.

Understand that if we have lived 70 years, at the end of our life, when we leave our body, the whole scene, the whole 70 years appear before us as a flash, as a fast-forward movement. The whole thing appears in our consciousness again so that we can make the decision about our next birth. Now, we have *karma* that we brought with us but have not enjoyed or experienced, as well as *karma* that we accumulated from society in this birth, but have not exhausted. Both are there.

I want to give you one more understanding: *karma* or *saṁskāra* means any desire that is not completely experienced by you. By nature you are a fulfilled being. But whenever you do not fulfill any action completely, with totality, you create a hangover. You create a recorded memory of that action, a *saṁskāra*. A *saṁskāra* is not merely a dead memory stored in your unconscious mind; it has the power to make you repeat that action again and again till the desire is fulfilled.

Please be very clear, *saṁskāra* is living energy because it has the power to make you repeat the same action again and again. It can make you travel the same path over and over again. That is why *saṁskāras* are called engraved memories.

The more you travel on a path, the more it will be strengthened. But if you have lived a single *saṁskāra* totally, completely, that *saṁskāra* leaves you! It drops from your being; you are liberated from it. Whatever you have not lived completely remains as a *saṁskāra* in you, as a *karma* in you.

Here you have brought some *karma* that you have not yet experienced, as well as newly accumulated *karma*. The whole thing appears in front of you at the time of leaving the body, so that you can decide your next birth.

If you need to make an important decision, don't you call for all the files, all the old files from the archives before you make the decision?

Now you are going to decide a few important things: where to take birth, what type of parents to choose, what type of family to choose, whether to choose a male body or female body; all these decisions you are going to make. Please be very clear, all these decisions are taken by your consciousness, not by anybody else. However, your consciousness is influenced by data, *karma* collected when you lived on planet earth.

One important thing you should understand is that even sense enjoyments look like enjoyment because from a young age you are taught that it is enjoyment. An important research report I read spoke about the lifestyle of a group of African tribal people. It said that they do not know anything called joy or sense pleasures. It is not that they do not eat. They eat good food: not food, good human beings! They eat everything, they taste, they smell, they listen, they see, they have the sense of touch, everything.

However, they do not have the idea that something is a pleasure. Because they do not have the idea of pleasure, they do not run after it. Because they are not conditioned and they are not taught to, they do not chase pleasures.

Before I continue telling you about these African people, let me share another example of how social conditioning works. During my days of wandering, I lived near Omkareshwar in Madhya Pradesh with a small group of tribal people. I was really surprised about the way they lived. Nobody, not a single person there was depressed. Please understand, what I say is the truth, the honest truth. Human beings *can* live on planet earth without getting depressed!

I lived with them for months. I was surprised that not a single person in that village was depressed, and nobody ran behind sense pleasures. I was surprised and thought to myself, 'How come these people lived without running behind sense pleasures?' It was because they had not been taught that there is something called sense pleasure. The corruption, the basic corruption had not happened.

We read in the Bible that Adam committed the original sin; the relationship between Adam and Eve is the original sin. I tell you, whether the relationship is the original sin or not, I do not know. But when we are taught that something is a pleasure and therefore should not be done, it is then that sin starts.

One more interesting thing I want to tell you. When I was with these tribal people in Madhya Pradesh, I lived in a small temple in the center of the village. While wandering about one day I came upon a small hut. A pregnant lady entered it. Half an hour later, she came out with a newborn baby! There was no pain, no attendant, no doctor, no medicine, no screaming. Within half an hour she walked out with a baby.

I was shocked! Of course, I could not ask her anything because I did not know their language. After one month, another pregnant lady did the same thing. Within half an hour she came out with a baby. Now it was too much! I asked the local priest who came to the temple, 'How does this happen? Don't they have pain?'

He asked in surprise, 'Pain? Why pain?'

I was surprised! They do not have pain at the time of delivery. The idea that women should have pain during delivery does not exist in their society. Not only that, nobody suffers from menopause problems. Nobody suffers from any gynaecological disorders.

I enquired about their lifestyle. Then I understood that they respect women a lot in their culture. Women are never disrespected. They are never told that they become impure during their monthly periods. Women are never taught that they are lower than men. The moment a girl comes of age, she is honored and told, 'Now you are qualified to become a mother.' She is respected. People fall at her feet and she touches and heals them. They believe that if a woman touches and blesses them during her menstrual period, they will be healed. Because the conditioning is totally different, nobody suffers any pain there.

In the so-called civilized society today, women are disrespected. Again and again, they are taught, 'This is impurity; you are not pure now; this is not right, don't stand here, don't sit there.' Especially in India, it is real torture. Because of the wrong conditioning, women suffer pain. They suffer and struggle with pain. If they are not conditioned in this way, they will never feel pain.

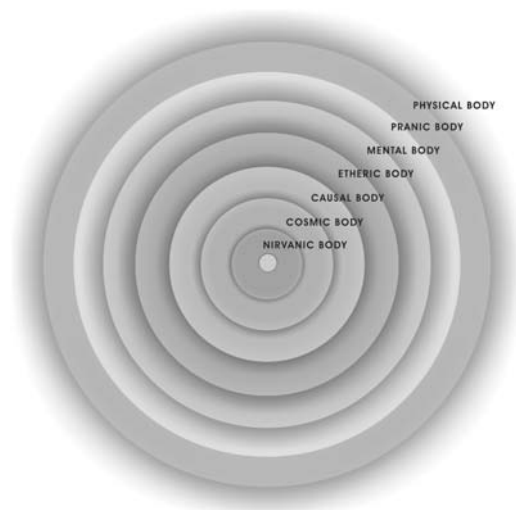
Getting back to the research on the African tribal people, the research scholar says, 'They don't know anything called pleasure.' Because of that, they do not run after pleasure. Social conditioning makes you run behind certain things. Social conditioning divides everything into pleasure and pain. Even this decision - 'What kind of life will I choose in my next birth? What kind of body will I take?' - is based upon your social conditioning.

You decide to achieve whatever you think is the highest thing in life. You automatically run behind whatever is kept as an ideal in front of your eyes. Whatever you consider the highest ideal of your whole life, only that comes to your mind when you leave the body. Krishna says, 'Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kunti, that state he will attain without fail.'

What exactly happens at the time of leaving the body? We should understand that. When a person leaves the body, he goes through seven layers of his being.

The first and the outermost layer is the physical layer. When a person leaves the body, it creates tremendous pain in his whole system. The whole system undergoes tremendous pain, what the *Upaniṣads* liken to 'thousands of scorpions stinging at a time.'

Please don't think I am frightening you. I must state a few truths and facts as they are. Even though it may hurt, it is better to tell them now. At least we will be better prepared for the journey that we are going to take or that will be forced upon us. Whether we will take it or it will be forced upon us we don't know, but we must make this journey. Let us at least understand what happens then.



There will be tremendous pain at first. We may ask, 'Why pain?' It is because our being wants to stay in the body, but the body cannot host the being anymore. There is no need for our being to leave unless the body is completely tired or exhausted. If death starts happening, this means the body is completely exhausted, or damaged. In natural death, the body is exhausted, so we leave the body. In an accident, the body is damaged.

Understand: You know what pain we experience if we cut our finger half an inch wide while cutting vegetables. What would the pain be like if we extend the same thing to our six-foot body? It will be simply torn, is it not? Naturally there will be tremendous pain. But one thing: there is an automatic mechanism in our being, an automatic painkiller mechanism. What happens is, the moment the pain becomes unbearable, we fall into coma. If we fall into coma, we will not experience pain. But the big problem is that we die in unconsciousness when we die in coma. That is the

worst thing, because we remain unaware of why we took this birth, and we will not be able to make the decision about the next birth consciously. That is the reason Krishna says: *yaṁ yaṁ vā 'pi smaran bhāvaṁ*; in whatever state you are at the time of leaving the body, you will achieve that state without fail. If we are unconscious at the time of leaving the body, we naturally take lower level bodies in our next birth; we come back as beings which do not have a high level of consciousness.

At the time of death, the moment we leave the physical body, we go to the next level, the *pranic* body or the *pranic* layer in us. The *pranic* body refers to the layer responsible for the inhaling and exhaling of *prāna*, the life giving energy in our body. The *pranic* body is filled with all our desires. Please understand, our *prāna* and desires are closely related. If our desires change, immediately the circulation of our *prāna* changes.

Similarly, if we change the circulation of *prāna*, our whole mind changes. Our mind and *prāna* are closely connected. That is why people inhale and exhale, pull and push with their breath at the time of leaving; they suffer. The body says, 'I can't host you anymore; relax, go out.' But the being says, 'But I have so many desires. I must live in this body. I must enjoy this body.' The tug of war happens between body and being.

Next during the death process, we move to the mental layer, *mana śarīra*. All the guilt that we harbour throughout our lives, stays in this layer. Desire is expectation about the future. Guilt is regret about the past. Guilt is: I have not lived in this way - thoughts about the past. Desire is: I should live like this - a thought about the future. Understand, guilt is nothing but the emotion created in our being when we review our past decisions with updated intelligence.

Let me give you a small example. At the age of seven we are playing with our toys. Our mother comes and calls us for dinner, 'Come and eat.' We say, 'No, I don't want to eat; I want to play.' By force our mother takes away the toys and pulls us to come and eat. Immediately we say, 'You go and die; give me my toys, I want to play.'

At that moment, the toys look most important to us. We feel that toys are more important in life than our mother. But as we mature, we understand that this isn't true. Once we mature, if we think, 'O what a grave mistake I made. I shouldn't have said those words to my mother. It is a big mistake. How important the mother is! But I never thought of it at that time!'... If we create guilt in this fashion, there is no point or utility in it. At that moment as a young child, we had only that much intelligence. Now, our intelligence has been updated. If we review our past decisions with updated intelligence, we create only one thing: guilt.

Please be very clear, if God gives us one more life, we will make the *same* mistakes that we made when we reach seven years of age because we will have only that much intelligence at the age of seven. Now our intelligence has been updated. Just because our intelligence has been updated *now*, we can't review our actions and create guilt in ourselves about what we did earlier. We should see what data was available to us to make decisions with at that time.

We had such and such data and we had only that much intelligence to process the data at that time. Based on that, we made the decision. Now the intelligence to process the data has been updated; our software has been updated. Because our software has been updated, we now say, 'O! I made the wrong decision at that time; I am suffering from guilt.' This does not make sense.

We had only that software at that time. The software to process the data and make a better decision was not available to us at that time. We had only so much intelligence. What are we supposed to do about it now? One more thing: Guilt is a wedge inserted in our being. It creates uneasiness between you and your being.

Be very clear, the worst sin is guilt.

If there is something called sin, it is guilt. Guilt is the only sin; nothing else is a sin on planet earth. It is important that we understand that we can never become pure through guilt. We can never achieve morality through guilt. People ask, 'How is that, *Swamiji*? How can I become a better person without guilt?'

Please be very clear: We can never become a better person, a moral person, or a pure person through guilt. Instead, guilt becomes such a load on us that again and again we make the same mistake. If we have deep guilt about smoking, we can never quit smoking because the habit is strengthened when the guilty thoughts are continuously repeated in our system. Whatever is continuously repeated in our consciousness becomes strong; we never grow out of it.

In Ramayana, there is a character called Vali. Vali is a strange character. He had obtained a boon from Lord Shiva that whosoever comes in front of him to fight him, half of that person's power would go to Vali. If we stand in front of Vali, half of our power goes to Vali! He has some power already and he also gets half of our power. Naturally who will win? Only he will win!

Understand, our guilt is Vali. The moment we fight the smoking habit, we give half our power to the habit. We struggle with the habit. Then how can we come out of it? We can never come out through guilt.

There is a beautiful one-liner from Bernard Shaw. He says, 'Quitting smoking is easy, I have done it many times!' We can continue to quit many times, that's all;

we never get out of the habit, we never get out of the cycle. We are caught in the rut. Guilt creates a rut that we will never be able to get out of.

Please be very clear: If we remove guilt, at least our personality will be integrated. We will be centered. When our personality is integrated, we will naturally become pure and energetic. All immoral behavior is because we don't have enough energy. The person with plenty of energy is always pure. The person without energy is immoral. In society we have a wrong idea that people who are full of energy do nonsensical things. Never think so.

Doing immoral things means a person *wants* energy through that action. He feels he will get energy through that action. Understand, even our sense enjoyments, running behind our senses, are in the same league. We feel that we will get energy through that action. We believe that we will feel blissful through that action. Running behind the senses is nothing but running behind energy. All of our running is nothing but running behind energy.

When we review past decisions with updated intelligence, we create guilt. Never make that mistake. If we create guilt, the whole thing sits in the mental body and when we leave the body it becomes a big obstruction.

The next layer we cross in the process of death is the etheric body. Here, all the painful experiences that we had in life are stored.

These four layers are hell. When the energy crosses these four layers: physical body, *pranic* body, mental body and etheric body, the being undergoes hell. Please understand that hell is not situated in a place above our heads, but in these four layers, comprising all our desires, guilt and painful experiences.

During our life in the body, if we have kept these four layers clean, we never enter hell. That is, if we can technically clean these layers; when I say 'technically', I mean through meditation. If we keep these layers clean with the proper meditation techniques, we will never have a problem at the time of leaving the body. We will have a clear highway. Straightaway we will travel! That is what Krishna says: This is the path on which a man can easily leave and liberate himself, and also the path on which he can suffer and destroy himself. Both ways are now shown by Krishna. These are the major obstructions when we leave the body.

After these first four layers, the three inner layers where all our blissful memories are stored are called heaven. Even if we are stuck there, we need to move on. Please be very clear, even our *puṇya*, merits, are *karma*. Even that will not

allow us to become enlightened. We may feel good, ecstatic, for a few days. After that our mind takes that also for granted. For example, we are walking on the beach. When we see properties near the beach, we have a small temptation, 'Why not have a cottage here? In the evenings I can sit and enjoy the sunset.' But the moment we have the cottage, what happens in three days? We take it for granted. We say, 'Oh! Same house, same wife, same chair, same beach!' That's all! We take the whole thing for granted. In the case of heaven also, we will take it for granted after a few days. When we take it for granted, the trouble starts and you have to come back to take another body, another birth.

Q: Swamiji, you say that merits acquired through good deeds, what we call *punya*, are also *karma*. Unless these too are eliminated we shall not be free. How can this be? We have been told all through our lives to lead good lives and perform good deeds so that we can acquire *punya* and go to heaven. Now you say that this is of no use!

Please understand, all this talk about sins and merits, *pāpa* and *punya*, is only to keep you under control. Religions use this so that your social behavior is acceptable and so that you do not cause too much trouble while you are alive. If everyone becomes free of the fear of death, my God, what will happen? There will be anarchy. Nobody will listen to authority!

So, they tell you: Be a good person, don't do wrong things, don't lie, don't steal, etc. Even if you do, they keep a loophole ready. Once a week go to the church or temple; pray, confess, give money to the priests (so they can also live!). Then you too can live in peace. All your sins will be dissolved and you can go to heaven. If you sin again, how does it matter? The temple is there. The priest is still there. You still have some money and you can repent again. So, the cycle goes on and on.

As long as you have something in your bank balance in the form of thoughts, words and actions, whether they are good or bad, you return to a body, whatever that body may be. If the mindset had been really bad, you may be reborn in the body of an animal. If your actions had been instinctive and arising from the unconscious, even in this life you would have led the life of an animal, so you will revert to an animal body in your next birth.

If your mindset had been noble and you did good things as prescribed by your religion with the expectation of reaching heaven, you will be reborn as a human. But you will be reborn, as you are still caught in good thoughts.

Krishna says time and again in the Gita to act without worrying about the outcome. When you act without any ulterior motive and without attachment to the result, then you acquire no *karma*. Without *karma*, you do not need to be reborn.

In Hindu mythology and other mythologies, they talk about the *devas* and the *asuras*, angels and devils. Believe me, there is little difference between the two.

Asuras, the monsters of the netherworld as they are pictured in Hindu mythology, were without exception great men of tremendous courage and noble qualities. However, they were attached to their body and physical pleasures. Because they were so attached to the body, the greatest sacrifice that *asuras* would make was to offer parts of their bodies to the fire without flinching; such was their courage. *Asuras* were caught in the physical plane and only by renouncing their mindset of sensual pleasures could they be liberated.

Devas, the angelic beings said to populate the heavenly space, were in bondage too. They were tied to their mental layer and could not give up the pleasures of the mind. Only when they sacrificed the memories in the mental layer, could they move on.

The only pathway to liberation from the cycle of life and death is non-attachment. Remember that life and death have no purpose. They are paths with no goals. You need to accept both as they are, as they occur. With such understanding, you acquire no further desires and therefore no *karma*. You settle into eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.



Be Sure To Reach Me

8.7 Arjuna, think of Me in the form of Krishna always, while continuing with your prescribed duty of fighting.

With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt.

8.8 He who meditates on the supreme person, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, not deviating from the path, O Paartha,

Is sure to reach Me.

8.9 One should meditate on the supreme as the one who knows everything, as He is the most ancient, who is the controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everything, who is beyond all material conception, who is inconceivable, and who is always a person.

He is luminous like the sun and, being transcendental, is beyond this material nature.

8.10 One, who at the time of death, fixes his mind and life breath between the eyebrows without being distracted, who by the power of yoga and in full devotion engages himself in dwelling on Me,

He will certainly attain Me.

In the first two of these verses Krishna says, 'Arjuna, you should always think of Me. You should always be in My state of consciousness even when you are doing your regular duty, even in your activities. Let your mind and intelligence be fixed in My consciousness. You will attain Me without doubt.'

Again He uses the words, 'without doubt', *asamasyah* 'Without doubt, you will achieve Me.'

One important question we may ask, 'Anyhow, I have to think of Him only at the time of leaving the body, so why bother doing that now? Right now, let me lead my life. At the time of death, I will think about Him.' Please be very clear, these verses answer that question.

We cannot think about Him *then* unless we think about Him *now*. Don't think that when we live our whole life repeating the words, 'Coca-cola, Coca-cola', suddenly at the end of our lives we will be able to say, 'Rama, Krishna.' No!

Whatever we think during our whole life, the same thought will come to us in the end also. But we think, 'Now I can say 'Coca-cola, Coca-cola'; at the end, I can always say, 'Rama, Krishna.' No! Whatever we repeat now, we will repeat the same thing in the end, because we will not be able to remember what we want to remember at that time. Our consciousness will not be under our control at that time!

At the time of our death, automatically the totality of our whole life will come up. The whole file will come up. Whatever we spent the maximum energy on, that file will automatically come up first. That's all. We can't do anything in that moment. Don't think that we can forget about it now and tackle the issue of our last thought at the time we leave the body. It does not work that way! Only the thought that we lived with intensely throughout our life will come up at that moment. That is why He says, 'Even when you do your duty, may you be absorbed in Me.' This means that when we live, we should try to continuously be in thoughtless awareness, the witnessing consciousness, the Krishna consciousness.

The next question: 'How can I be in the witnessing mode when I live my regular life?'

Start in a simple way. When you drive, when you sit, when you talk, see what is happening inside and outside you; what is happening inside your being and outside your being. You don't need to close your eyes. At least while driving, please don't close your eyes! Just move away from your body. See what is going on in your mind and what is going on outside your being.

When you sit and talk to someone, witness how he talks and how you respond. Even before he finishes his statement, notice how you come to conclusions and how you are ready to jump on him with your own opinions! See how you prepare your speech before he finishes his statement. Witness, continuously try to witness. You

will see the influence of desires, guilt and pain on your being automatically disappear.

The moment you create a gap between you and your body-mind, immediately the suffering disappears. Suffering is due to attachment to your body and mind. All your sufferings disappear the moment you witness, that very moment. Actually, you may fail the first few times. After you face failure, you think, 'It is difficult, I cannot do it,' and you create an idea that it is difficult.

Somebody goes to Ramana Maharshi, the enlightened saint from India, and asks, 'Master, is *ātma vidya* (knowledge of the self) difficult?' He says, 'The word *difficult* is the only difficulty.' He sings beautifully in Tamil, '*Aiyye ati sulabham atma viddai, aiyye ati sulabham*' - *Oh! So easy! The knowledge of the Self is so easy!* He sings beautifully, 'To achieve money you must work, to achieve name and fame you must work, to achieve anything else you must work. To achieve the knowledge of the Self, you need to just keep quiet. Nothing else needs to be done.' Such a simple thing; a few moments of witnessing consciousness is enough.

Now don't start calculating, 'From tomorrow onwards, 24 hours a day I will be in the witnessing consciousness.' Don't start calculating. Then you will become frustrated if you are unable to be that way. So don't bother. Even if you stay in that consciousness for five minutes, it is a big blessing. When you experience the relief that happens when you remain as the witness, even once or twice, when you experience the relief, you can see how the stress disappears from your being. Then you will automatically stay in that same state, because now you have tasted it. Once you know the taste, you will automatically come back to the same state; you will come back to the same mood again and again.

Ramakrishna says, 'If you give a little bit of *abhin* (an opium variant) to a peacock one evening at four o'clock, the next day exactly at four o'clock, it will be in front of your house!' In North India they give *abhin* to peacocks to make them dance. They mix a little bit of *abhin* with rice and place it in front of their home. Once the peacocks eat the rice, they start dancing. Ramakrishna says that once you supply *abhin* at a particular time, they will automatically be there in search of *abhin* the next day at the same time.

Similarly, if we just experience the relaxation that happens once, the relief that happens when we witness the body and mind, we will automatically come back for that experience, for that peace, again and again. If we feel witnessing is difficult, witness that thought also; be aware of that thought also. Go into the consciousness

of your being. Experience *samādhī* so that all hindrances disappear. You will experience the ultimate, eternal consciousness.

In the next verse Krishna says, 'At the time of death, fix your mind between the eyebrows.' He adds, 'without being distracted and with devotion.' See, all this is not in our control at the time when the life force is about to leave the body. We cannot decide at that time, 'Ok, let me focus between the eyebrows, let me think of devotion, let me not be distracted.' But if we have led a life in such higher consciousness, this automatically happens at that time! When Krishna talks about the space between the eyebrows, He speaks of the higher *cakra* or energy center in the body, related to higher consciousness.

Our mind is nothing but a bunch of conditionings. All these conditionings influence us at the time of death. How do we condition our mind? If we think that eating is the best thing in life, when we leave the body, what comes in front of us? All kinds of food and the Macdonald arches!

If we are taught that eating is the greatest pleasure in life, we see only all kinds of food when we leave this body. When we decide that eating is the best thing in life, then the last thought will be, 'Let me choose a country where I can eat all the time. Let me take a body that will help me eat more and more. Let me take birth in a family where I will be given food and nothing but food, where I will not have any other responsibility.'

We call for the archived files. The essence, the research report, is in front of us. From all the experiences of our past, we choose what we think is best and what we have worked for all our life. Based on that, we make a decision, 'Alright, if I want to eat, this is the right country.' There we will spend our next life, in *tamas*, in dullness, not doing anything, in just pure laziness.

A small story:

A man goes to a doctor and says, 'Doctor, please examine me. I don't feel like doing anything. I feel dull.'

The doctor thoroughly examines him. The man says, 'Doctor, please tell me in plain English, what is my problem?'

The doctor says, 'If you ask me, in plain English, you are 'lazy'. Nothing else is the problem.'

The man says, 'Ok, now tell me the medical term for it; I will go and tell my wife!'

If we have lived that kind of a life, a lethargic, dead, dull and lazy life, that same laziness will make the choice for us when we take the next body. I have seen amazing laziness amongst people. If you want to see the ultimate laziness, come to the Himalayas. You can see strange kinds of laziness. That is why Vivekananda says openly in his lectures, 'The people who eat and sleep in the name of *sanyās...* *make them stand up, and simply beat them!*' Pure laziness!

A man tells his friend, 'If only somebody would invent a machine that does all our work when switched on: laundry, cleaning, cooking, ironing, giving us a bath and putting on clothes! How nice it would be if the machine did everything at the flick of a switch!'

His friend replies, 'How much nicer would it be if the machine also automatically switched itself on and off!'

This is what I call the peak of laziness! If we live our life spending our energy in laziness, we just get lazier. Please be very clear, we actually *spend* energy when we are lazy. Don't think we are not spending energy. Have you heard the phrase, 'tired of sleeping?' Many people are tired of taking rest. We will be tired if we sleep for more than a few hours. If we sleep for more than ten hours, we will be tired of taking rest.

To be tired of taking rest is *tamas*. If we have lived life completely in *tamas*, we naturally decide, 'Anyhow, the ultimate thing in life is sleep. Now which country is the right country to allow lots of sleep? What type of body is the right body - whether pig or buffalo or human being? What type of family should I take birth in?' We make a decision. Please be very clear, the whole calculation happens based on our own data, the data that we have collected.

As I said, at the time of leaving the body, the whole data appears before us in a single flash: the gist of the whole data, the gist of all three files - *āgāmya* (acquired) file, *sañcita* (bank balance) file and *prārabdha* (current) file. Based on the files, we decide, 'What am I supposed to do? What should be my next birth?' The moment we decide, we enter that kind of body. One more important thing: Because we are so attached to the body and mind, we cannot live without a body for more than three *kṣaṇas*. The sanskrit word *kṣaṇa* does not mean 'seconds' or 'moments'. It does not measure chronological time. It is the gap between one thought and the next thought. For most of us, *kṣaṇa* will be a few microseconds because of our endless stream of thoughts.

While still in the body, if we have experienced 'thoughtlessness' at least once, (thoughtlessness means being alive without a sense of body and mind), if we have experienced thoughtless awareness, if we have been in universal consciousness for a single moment without the body and mind, that is what I call *samādhī*.

Here is a small diagram to explain what exactly I mean by the word 'thoughtlessness'.

	With Thoughts	Without Thoughts
With Consciousness	Waking	Samadhi
Without Consciousness	Dream	Deep Sleep

In our life, we experience two states of being and two levels of mind. For example, now, while we are awake, we have thoughts. In deep sleep, do we have thoughts? No! So the two possibilities for the mind are with thought and without thought.

In the same way, in the being, there can be 'I' consciousness and no 'I' consciousness.

As of now, while we are awake and talking and moving, we have the idea of 'I' all the time, that of 'I' consciousness. In deep sleep, do we have this consciousness? No. The 'I' consciousness does not exist at that time. So the two levels of the being are: with 'I' consciousness and without 'I' consciousness. These two levels of consciousness and the two levels of mind and thought overlap each other and create four states of being in us.

The state with thoughts and with 'I' consciousness is the waking state, *jāgrat*, in which most of us are now (not all, some of us are in the dream state - sleeping already!)

The next state is when we have thoughts, but 'I' consciousness is absent. This is the dream state - *svapna*. You may ask, 'How?' It is like this: In the dream state, the frequency of thoughts will be more than the frequency of 'I' consciousness. That is why we are not able to control our dreams. When we are awake, the frequency

of 'I' is more, that is why we can control our thoughts; we can suppress them, divert them, create them; we can do anything we want because the frequency of 'I' is more than the frequency of thoughts. In the dream state, the frequency of thoughts is more than the frequency of 'I'. That is why we cannot control our dreams. If we can have the dreams of our choice, we know what kind of dreams we will have! Dreams are not in our control. We cannot influence them. We cannot have choices because the frequency of thoughts is more than the frequency of consciousness. So we have thoughts but no 'I' consciousness. The flow of thoughts is happening in our being is the dream state.

In the next state, neither 'I' consciousness nor the flow of thoughts exists. This is deep sleep. This is called *suṣupti*. The three states are *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *suṣupti* – conscious, sub-conscious, unconscious.

There is a fourth state that we have not experienced in our life, where we have no flow of thoughts yet we have 'I' consciousness, pure 'I' consciousness. This is *samādhi*, thoughtless awareness, *turiya avastha*, *ātma jñāna*, *brahma jñāna*, Self-realization, *nirvāna*, *ātma bhūti*, state of the Divine, *nitya* consciousness, eternal bliss!

All these words refer to the state where we have pure awareness but no thoughts, where we exist without body and mind. *Jāgrat*, *svapna*, *suṣupti*, in these three states, we live with the body and mind. In *jāgrat*, we live with the body that we have now – the *sthūla śarīra* or gross body. In *svapna*, we live with the *sūkṣma śarīra* or subtle body; please understand in the dream state also we assume a body. That is why we are able to travel in our dreams. For example, we fall asleep in Los Angeles but suddenly dream we are in India! It means we travel with a body, a subtle body called *sūkṣma śarīra*. In deep sleep, we assume a body called the causal body, *karana śarīra*.

In *turiya* state, we experience boundarilessness, bodylessness. There we have pure 'I' consciousness, with 'I' but without thoughts. Vivekananda says, 'If you experience even a single glimpse of this consciousness when you are alive, the same thing automatically repeats when you leave the body. You leave the body in *samādhi*.'

All spiritual practices directly or indirectly aim at achieving this state where we exist with the awareness of 'I', but without the consciousness of body and mind.

That is why Krishna says that if we experience at least one moment of consciousness beyond the body and mind, we can choose our next life in a relaxed way.

If we have not lived a single moment of our life without the feeling of being the body and mind, we cannot be without the body and mind once we die. So once we die, we immediately try to catch hold of another body. Because we have never lived a single moment without body and mind, the moment we die, we will not bother about which body we are getting into. We rush as fast as possible. It's like we are late for a train, so we run and jump onto the first train that we see, not thinking about where it's headed. We say, 'Let me just get into some train!' We rush and get into some body or the other and come down to planet earth yet another time.

After coming down, we again forget the supreme purpose of assuming the body; this is the biggest problem. The whole thing is confusion leading to confusion and more confusion. If we have experienced a single moment of complete rest and thoughtless awareness, naturally at the moment when we leave the body, we will be in the same state. This state is also called 'bodyless' awareness because when we are in *turiya* state, all the three bodies do not touch us; neither the gross body nor the subtle body nor the causal body touches us.

We experience awareness that is beyond the three bodies. If we have experienced this thoughtless awareness for even a single moment earlier, we will have the required clarity in the end. If we have experienced that we can exist without the body and mind, we will have the patience to work with our data files before assuming the next body. We will go through the data line carefully and decide, 'Should I take birth at all? What is the need?' Sometimes, if we decide to take birth, we can even take a conscious birth, like the great masters!

Krishna says *yogabrah̥tha*. We take birth in a family that will be conducive to our spiritual growth, which will not create obstacles to our spiritual practices. Krishna says that only very rarely do souls take birth in this type of family. I have rarely seen parents who do not object when the son does spiritual practices. If your family does not object, if they do not disturb you, please be very clear, there is every chance of your being a *yogabrah̥tha*!

Otherwise, I have seen even religious parents creating obstacles if their son wants to enter *sanyās* or spiritual life. They say, 'Go to temples but not to ashrams!' As long as you go to temples, things go smoothly, because it is ok as long as you grow to the level where the parents are. But if you grow beyond the maturity of the parents, it is something that they cannot digest. Very rarely do souls take birth in families where they will not be disturbed. When I left home for my *parivrājaka* (wandering *sanyās* life), I was young;

just 17 years old. I told my mother that I was going, that I wanted to live the *parivrājaka* life, I wanted to taste *sanyās* life.

She started weeping. So I asked her, ‘Do you mean that I should not go?’

She said beautifully, ‘No, I don’t want to stop you. But I am not able to digest the idea of your leaving, so I am weeping.’ Even today I am grateful to my parents because they did not stop me. Not only that, from a young age I did all sorts of things that you can’t even imagine. Sometimes I used to spend the night meditating in the graveyard in the outskirts of my village! I don’t think other parents would have tolerated it. Yet somehow the atmosphere was such that I was able to continue my spiritual practice.

If your family and surroundings do not disturb you but help you instead, please be very clear that you have taken a conscious birth - you are a *yogabrahṭha*.

But if you have not experienced a single glimpse, a single moment of thoughtless awareness, you cannot live without the body and mind once you die. So within three *kṣaṇas*, you take birth in some way or the other.

Even a glimpse of consciousness, a moment of realization, a single moment of thoughtless awareness when you live with the body and mind is enough. Nithyananda Spurana Program, or LBP 2, is directly focused on this concept. All I try to do is give you a single glimpse of consciousness, thoughtless awareness.

Actually, if you achieve one glimpse of thoughtless awareness, you achieve whatever has to be achieved in life. If you have not achieved one glimpse of *samādhi* or thoughtless awareness, whatever else you achieve is not ultimately useful. In the next step, Krishna explains how to achieve thoughtless awareness and gives a deeper understanding about death and the art of leaving. In the next session, we will examine the words of Krishna in a much more detailed way.

Q: Swamiji, you said the Nithyananda Spurana Program or LBP 2 is based on your personal experience. Can you tell us more about this?

Ok, let me tell you why I started the Nithyananda Spurana Program or how this program happened.

Before I begin, let me take an oath: I hereby promise that whatever I am going to say is the Truth. I take this oath.

You may ask, ‘Why are you taking this oath, Swamiji?’

Understand one important thing: Generally, to tell you the truth, we never believe anyone's words. Please be very clear, we never believe that anybody speaks the truth. Look into your mind and you will understand. We never really believe what anybody says. Only if someone says something that we already know, we believe it. If he says something that we don't know, we don't believe it. Either we question it, or if we are in a position where we can't question, we keep quiet out of politeness, but we never believe it. We never receive his words.

Please understand, if we have the capacity, we oppose. If we are in a position where we can't oppose, we don't question, but we don't allow the words to penetrate us. We don't allow the words to enter us. That is the reason I take the oath now – whatever I say is the TRUTH. To understand something in the outer world, our mind is enough. Our logic is enough. But to experience something in the inner world, we need the help of a master.

The person who creates a formula to re-create an experience of the outer world is a scientist. For example, Newton discovered the law of gravity. He had an experience. When he saw the apple falling from the tree, he had a realization. So he created a formula to reproduce the same understanding in others. So we can say, the person who creates a formula to understand and reproduce an experience of the outer world is a scientist.

Similarly, a person who creates a formula to reproduce experiences of the inner world is a master. This whole program is a formula to reproduce experiences that happened in me, in the inner world. So naturally I must explain how this experience happened and how this formula happened.

If someone asks Newton to explain how he arrived at the law of gravity, he must start with how he started. He must explain how he saw the apple falling, and what happened inside him. He needs to clarify the logical steps by which he came to a conclusion. Now I am explaining in the same way, how this experience happened in me, and how this formula can reproduce the same experience in you. These two things must be understood: First, how this experience happened in me, and second, how this formula can reproduce the same experience in you. Unless we clearly understand these things, we will not be able to work with this formula.

Before my enlightenment, I was near the holy town of Varanasi in North India. There I met an elderly *sanyāsi* – a very old *sanyāsi*. He was suffering from cancer. He was in the hospital, in the ICU, Intensive Care Unit. Somehow, I had the great opportunity to take care of him. He was a great *sanyāsi*, but not an enlightened person; he was a great *tapasvi* – one who has done a lot of penance. Even though he had not become enlightened, he was a great *tapasvi*. I had the great fortune to

serve him during his last days. Everyday I brought food for him and took care of his needs during his stay in the hospital.

One day, the patient in the bed next to him was slowly passing away. He was dying. The doctors stood around him trying their best to help, but they were unable to do anything. Even though I was not enlightened, I had had a wonderful spiritual experience. It was a beautiful experience, my own death experience. I had had a beautiful spiritual experience in the same city earlier. I was in the Manikarnika ghat in Varanasi where they cremate dead bodies. Here I had had the experience of my body dying and my spirit leaving the body-mind.

Because of that experience, I could now see what was happening to this person. Slowly, as death set in, he started suffering and struggling.

First, he suffered tremendous pain in the body. His face started showing pain. Next, the breath stopped; the suffering of breathlessness started. He started inhaling and exhaling with great difficulty. I clearly saw the pain and the agony, the suffering. Even now I remember, I can see and feel that same pain, so much pain. It was really as they say, one thousand scorpions attacking him; one thousand scorpions attacking him at a time, and his whole consciousness getting torn. If we cut our finger half an inch wide with a blade, how much pain will we experience? How much pain will we suffer? This first step of death was like a six-foot knife cutting his entire length of body.

I could experience the pain, the agony, the feeling that he was undergoing. Of course, slowly, very slowly, he started moving away from the physical body. Even though it is difficult to receive this logically, even though it is difficult to understand this intellectually, this is what happened. Of course, once I finish, then we will analyze it.

Let me first express what I experienced, then we will analyze it. Here, if you are able to receive whatever I am speaking, then receive it. Otherwise, understand this as a hypothesis. Even if we understand it as a hypothesis, it is enough. At the end of it, we will understand how this whole thing happens. I was able to see and experience it all. I saw and experienced the tremendous pain and agony of that being. It was excruciating pain; such deep suffering.

The being, the spirit, moved from the physical body to the *pranic* layer, the second body layer. The *pranic* layer is our breath energy. All these seven bodies are seven energies. They are the energy layers of our being. When the being started moving towards the *pranic* layer, again deep suffering happened. Our *pranic* body is filled with all our desires. As I mentioned, breathing and desires are closely related.

If we change our breathing, our desires can change. When his energy was moving into the *pranic* layer, all the desires of the being came up. The being suffered due to all the unfulfilled desires.

When the being, the person, started moving towards the next level body, the mental body, guilt started rising. The guilt will make you feel, 'Oh! I should have lived in that way, I should have lived in this way.' Anyway, slowly, very slowly, the being moved out layer by layer and the person died. I saw the whole process. But I was not able to help him. I was not enlightened at that time, so I was unable to help. I just saw the suffering. The pain created in me just by seeing the suffering itself was too much.

Then I understood why only enlightened masters have the power to see these things. I tell you honestly, we suffer more if we have the extraordinary power to see these things without the energy to help.

Many people ask me, '*Swamiji*, please give me the memory of my past life. Please help me see my past life.' I ask, 'What is your age?' They say they are around 40-50 years old. People want to see these things at this age! I tell them, 'Are you able to handle and be peaceful with the memories of the last 40-50 years of this life?' We are not even able to handle the last 40-50 years' memories! The memories just haunt us. If we can't handle our 40-50 years' memories, how will we handle 100 years more? How will we handle 140 years' of memories?

That is why, by divine grace, we don't remember our past lives. If we remember our past lives, we will have more suffering. We will suffer more and we will be unhappy. When we have this mystical power, this extraordinary power, without the capacity to help, naturally we enter into more trouble. We will not be happy.

Along with the person, I too experienced the pain; it was like observing a gruesome accident on the road. If we see an accident, will we be able to eat for the next two days? No! It was the same for me. And in an accident, we see only one body. But I saw all seven layers, all seven bodies! What happened to the suffering? It got so deeply engraved, so deeply recorded in my being, that I was not able to eat or sleep for the next three to four days. It was an unbelievable suffering. Anyhow, after a few days, I left Varanasi.

After a year or two, after my enlightenment or Self-realization experience, I came to the south of India. I stayed in small towns for one to two years. A little later, I witnessed death again.

The person I witnessed in the second instance did not suffer. I saw the second death also in an ICU of a hospital. The second person did not suffer. I analyzed the

situation, 'Why did the first person suffer and why didn't the second person suffer?' After analyzing or meditating on that issue, something came up - as a formula. That formula is this whole program, NSP.

Let me explain about the second death. I was already enlightened at the time I saw the second death. I went to the hospital to heal a devotee. I was healing the devotee in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Again, the patient in the next bed was dying. I was able to see what was happening. I saw the life slowly moving away from that person. The person had neither pain nor suffering. Beautifully he was moving, from the first layer to the second layer, the second layer to the third layer, the third layer to the fourth layer. It was like a ball rolling in the snow, the way his being was moving. I was surprised. His being moved smoothly, slowly and disappeared. He became enlightened. He was liberated!

I thought, 'Why did the first person suffer so much while this one did not have any suffering?' I thought that he must have been a spiritual person. He must have meditated a lot. I enquired about him. I asked his relatives, 'Was he a spiritual person?' The relatives answered in surprise, 'Meditation? Why do you ask? He would not even go to a temple.'

Then I contemplated, 'Why did the first person suffer so much and the second person have a beautiful and peaceful death?' Suddenly I realized a truth: it was my presence, the presence of an enlightened being, that allowed the second person to go away peacefully!

Let me come to the next step. After seeing this second death, I started seriously contemplating on how this can be reproduced, how we can help people leave the body consciously. I cannot go and stand in all the ICUs! That's impossible.

But fortunately, energy is not bound by time or space. Energy is beyond time and space. It's like tuning in to different television channels. All we need is a set top box, that's all. If we have a set top box in our house, we can tune in to any television channel. If we tune in to the BBC channel, we see the BBC news. If we tune in to the CNN channel, we see the CNN programs. Whatever channel we tune in to, we see those programs. Similarly, at the time of leaving the body, if we tune ourselves to consciousness, if we tune ourselves to thoughtless awareness, to conscious experiences, we will simply see that our life is a conscious experience. We will cross the ocean of *saṁsāra* or *saṁskāra*, the ocean of these seven layers, beautifully and peacefully.

The moment I got this understanding, something descended into me like a ball of consciousness. A formula happened in my consciousness. Giving this consciousness, this formula to the people, is the Nithyananda Spurana Program.

If we work with the theory of gravity, we completely understand what Newton experienced. In the same way, if you work with this formula that I am proposing to you, you can experience what I experienced. What happened in my consciousness can happen in your consciousness. All we need to do is work intensely with this formula. Go with this formula as intensely as possible. Nothing else needs to be done.



Remember Me Constantly

*8.11 Persons who are learned in the Veda and who are great sages in the orders of renunciation, enter into the **Brahman**.*

*Desiring such perfection, one practices **brahmacarya**. I shall now explain to you the process by which one may attain liberation.*

8.12 Closing all the doors of the senses and fixing the mind in the heart

And the life breath at the top of the head, one establishes oneself in yoga.

8.13 Centered in this yoga practice and uttering the sacred syllable Om, the supreme combination of letters, if one dwells in the Supreme and quits his body, he certainly achieves the supreme destination.

8.14 I am always available to anyone who remembers Me constantly

Partha, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.

Krishna gives different ways to attain *Brahman* or God or ultimate consciousness. He says that people learned in the *vedas* attain *Brahman*. This does not mean that we need to just read the *vedas* and then forget about them. Krishna speaks at a far deeper level.

Remember what Krishna says in the last verse. He says that whatever we think of at the time of death is directly related to our next birth. If someone is completely immersed in the scriptures, his thoughts will continuously be along those lines. That is what Krishna means by His words 'Immerse yourself in the scriptures'. Keep reading some scripture or the other and imbibe its truth. It will have a tremendous impact on you.

Please be very clear that if we do not understand the deeper meanings of these scriptures, it is ok. These scriptures are energy hubs. The verses quoted in them are whirlpools of energy. When we read them, the sound that is generated is enough. That sound cleanses our inner being. That is the power of those verses. They will transform you. They are meant for inner transformation.

If you listen to *vedic* chants, you will see they are chanted in a specific way. They have a specific tone and pitch. When they are chanted, they completely cleanse our system, our inner being. Most of us are not aware of this, yet they carry that energy for us.

If we visit the ancient temples in India, we will see that the sanctum sanctorum has a beautiful peace inside it. When we enter that place, automatically our being becomes peaceful. Why do you think that happens? Why do you think we feel a moment of bliss as soon as we enter the sanctum sanctorum? When the priest chants, that place gets energized. The sound of the chants carries tremendous energy and energizes everything in the place.

One more thing, these scriptures talk about realizing the Self. They are guides to enlightenment. So when we read them, we will get into that mood of enlightenment! Our mind will be tuned to that frequency.

It is like this: When we come out of a movie theatre after watching a movie, our mind keeps processing the scenes of the movie, is it not? It tries to recollect what the good man said, what the bad man said. For one or two days, we experience a hangover. In the same way, when we read these scriptures, even if we don't completely understand them, we will experience a hangover. We will continue to think about what they say; what enlightenment is, how to realize our Self, how enlightened masters live... these thoughts will come into our mind again and again.

This is what Krishna wants! When our thoughts are always directed towards Self-realization, our thoughts will be of enlightenment at the time of death also.

Krishna says, when we read the scriptures, when we practice this lifestyle, we practice *brahmacarya*. We should clearly understand this word. *Brahmacarya* is commonly misinterpreted as celibacy or abstinence from sex. The literal meaning of *brahmacarya* is one who follows the path to attain the Self. *Brahman* means the Self and *carya* means to walk the path. So *brahmacāri* does not mean a celibate. Anyone who is on the path to attain *Brahman* is a *brahmacāri*. Please be very clear what this word means.

A small story:

There was an old sea captain who was telling a story from his adventures to a group of people at a party.

He said, 'Once, I was shipwrecked on the coast of South America, and there I came across a tribe of women who had no tongues and were very wild.'

One lady said, 'My goodness! They couldn't talk?'

The old captain replied, 'No they couldn't talk, and that was what drove them wild.'

Be very clear. Suppression does not lead to transformation. It only creates depression. Suppression of desires is very dangerous; it is like a volcano ready to erupt anytime and we won't even know it.

Brahmacarya is not about leaving everything and becoming a celibate. Our inner space must be cleansed. Our inner space must be free from fantasies and we should strive to merge with the *Brahman*. That is *brahmacarya*.

Here Krishna talks about deep concepts of yoga. All great truths were told by different masters in different ways, yet the truths remain the same. If somebody who does not know the actual meaning of yoga reads this verse, he will be totally confused. Nowadays when people hear about yoga, they think of physical exercise, about how to become slim doing yoga! Yoga has a deeper meaning and Krishna talks about it.

Yoga means the continuous process of uniting our mind, body and soul. This truth is revealed by great enlightened masters in different ways. Patanjali, considered to be the father of yoga, talks about this verse in his Ashtanga Yoga. Ashtanga Yoga means eight limbs of yoga and two of these limbs are *pratyāhāra* and *dhāraṇa*. These two parts talk about what Krishna mentions.

Let us understand this verse and the two limbs of Ashtanga Yoga related to this verse. How do we bring about that continuous process of uniting body, mind and soul? What should we do? You see, our body-mind system reacts to different external situations. These external situations are like food, *āhāra* to our system and our five sense organs are the points through which we take in this food.

Please understand that our mind functions because we give food to our mind through our senses. We react to situations and our mind is continuously occupied

because of this. Our mind exists because we have thousands of thoughts. We are again and again jumping from past to future and back to past. Our five sense organs act as gateways through which this food goes in to our mind.

Pratyāhāra means getting ourselves out of the clutches of these senses. This does not mean that we physically shut down our senses. Please be very clear, *pratyāhāra* does not mean we shut our senses physically. Even if we close our eyes, an internal television runs in our system, does it not? Even if our ears and mouth are closed, there is inner chatter, is it not? We don't really shut down our senses. Even if we shut them physically, our mind functions. When I say, 'Close the doors of your senses,' I mean, 'Do not process the data.' What I mean is, continue to hear everything going on outside, continue to smell everything around, but do not process anything. Whatever comes, just witness, that's all.

That is the only way we can close the doors of our senses. We should neither suppress thoughts nor create thoughts. We should just watch them.

We cut the continuous flow of inputs from our senses when we increase our awareness. The number of thoughts slowly drops as awareness rises. As we increase awareness, our thoughts per second, TPS, drops.

This is what Krishna means by closing all the senses. When we do this, our awareness becomes more and more concentrated on the present moment. When we shut our senses and remain in pure awareness, we focus on our divinity. We keep a single-minded focus on the divinity resonating in us. We automatically fall into the present moment. Awareness of our breath becomes more acute. We feel life energy or *prāna* filling our system.

This is called *dhāraṇa*, single-minded focus. We can focus on the life force energizing our system when we increase our awareness and close all the inputs from our senses. We automatically unite mind, body and spirit. This is yoga.

Again and again Krishna speaks about this concept. He emphasizes this truth so much. He continuously tells Arjuna the importance of the last thought before death. We saw in the previous verses how much importance He gives to this truth.

You see, it is a powerful technique. These are not mere words to be read and not put into practice. People have used these words and left their bodies gracefully, understand that! They merged with the ultimate consciousness by practicing these techniques. Thousands of enlightened beings have constantly thought about God. They have expressed their undaunted devotion in so many carefree ways. People

laughed when they danced and sang the glory of God. People realized the power of that devotion only after these enlightened beings left their bodies, completely merging with the Cosmos.

Krishna says the people who reach Him are those who remain continuously on the path of yoga, continuously fixed upon the Divine without deviation. Krishna asks us to be in that state all the time. He asks us to be in Krishna consciousness all the time.

The problem is when an enlightened master says, 'Think of Me all the time,' we question, 'How can He say that? What kind of an egoistic person is He? Why should we think of Him?'

Actually, our ego plays the game. We think Krishna is exploiting us when He advises us to be in Krishna consciousness. Many people think I am exploiting them when I make such statements. They think I profit from all of this.

Please be very clear, Krishna, or any enlightened master, only asks us to keep our inner space completely free of desires. Our inner space should be completely free. Our thoughts are generally related to greed and fear. We keep piling up desires because our thought patterns are of greed and fear. Our list of desires continuously grows because of these two things.

When we die, our soul re-experiences these desires. Attachment to these desires makes our death painful. An enlightened master has seen this process and speaks from experience. He is pure compassion and He wants everyone to know the secret of mastering the art of leaving.

That is why Krishna says again and again: When we direct our thoughts to the Divine, greed and fear are completely wiped out. Our whole being is filled with gratitude to the Divine. One more thing, many people think of God because they want to go to heaven. Some people are afraid of death so they think of God. Both are only because of greed or fear.

When we think of the Divine, we should do so out of gratitude, and not out of greed or fear. Be very clear that thinking of God out of greed or fear will not help us. Our thoughts about God, our devotion to the Divine should be out of pure gratitude to Existence.

Q: Swamiji, is there something called sin? What are *pāpa* and *punya*, sin and merit?

I explained this once before; let me elaborate further.

The concept of sin was created by society to keep you under its control. It is not that if you do something bad, you commit sin, and hence go to hell. Society created such rules to control you. These are called moral codes. When someone breaks these rules, he is said to have committed a sin. Society created this concept of sin to create fear in everybody so that it could control everyone.

As long as we are in guilt, as long as we operate out of fear and greed, we are committing sin. Let me be very clear. We need not break any moral rule. We need not break any condition stipulated by society to be a sinner. As long as we are conditioned by society to operate in a certain way, as long as we do something because out of greed or fear, we keep committing only sins.

Any moral act should come out of consciousness, not out of conscience. When our consciousness is high, we will not do anything wrong because our inner space is clean. But when we operate out of conscience, we operate out of social conditioning. We do something because we think it is socially correct. We consider something meritorious, according to society's labeling. We operate out of fear of society. We operate out of greed for getting attention from others. When we do this, we commit sin and we are already in hell.

We talked about Patanjali's Yoga Sutra earlier when we discussed *yama*. *Yama* is one of the eight limbs of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga. It means self-discipline based on five qualities such as being truthful, etc. Like in the case of sin, being truthful becomes more of a moral duty if it is based on fear or greed. It cannot be sustained. Truthfulness should come out of consciousness for it to be consistent. When we are aware of ourselves, when our consciousness is high, we will not be able to say anything false. We will always be in the state of truth.

Yama also includes *ahimsā* or non-violence. This should also arise out of consciousness and not because it is morally or socially correct. If someone resorts to violence or protests against something, people talk about it. They call it being 'socially irresponsible'. However, if faced with a similar situation, the same people who talk about non-violence will commit the same act of violence.

When *ahimsā* happens out of a rise in consciousness, it is completely different. When this happens, understand that we do not have to tell anyone that we are non-violent. We do not have to make an attempt to be non-violent. It automatically happens to us because our inner space is clear. Let me share a real incident from my life.

During my wandering days, I passed through a forest. I searched for a place to sit and meditate. After roaming about for sometime, I found a small cave. I sat down in it and started meditating.

It was a dense forest and nobody came that way. I meditated for some time. I don't know for how long, but after sometime when I opened my eyes, I saw a long, poisonous snake lying beside me.

I saw the snake lying beside me quietly. It was not moving. Neither did I react to the snake nor did the snake react to my presence. Slowly, after a few moments, fear started rising in me. As this happened, I clearly saw that the snake too was getting disturbed. It too started experiencing fear. It started raising its head.

Do you see what happened? When I was meditating, I did not have fear. My inner space was completely empty. So the snake did not find me a threat. So it was lying beside me because I was immersed in myself. The snake knew that I would not harm it. As long as my mind did not create any fear in my inner space, the snake was lying still. But when I opened my eyes for a few seconds, the fear started growing in me. The snake sensed this, and now it knew that I could be a threat. I clearly saw that. So I got up with the same meditative calmness and walked away.

You see, when the consciousness is high, non-violence happens in you and you radiate that non-violence. It simply happens. You do not need to make an attempt.

Please understand that the concept of sin and merit is created by society to keep you under control. Let good happen out of consciousness and not out of conscience. So raise your consciousness; *punya* or good or merit will automatically happen in you.



Brahma's Day and Night

8.15 After attaining Me, the great souls who are devoted to Me in yoga are never reborn in this world.

This world is temporary and full of miseries and they have attained the highest perfection.

8.16 From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place.

One who reaches My abode, O son of Kunti, is never reborn.

8.17 By human calculation, a thousand ages taken together is the duration of Brahma's one day.

His night is just as long.

8.18 From the unmanifest all living entities come into being at the beginning of Brahma's day.

With the coming of Brahma's night, they dissolve into the same unmanifest.

Now He says, 'After attaining Me the great souls who are steeped in yoga never return to this temporary world which is full of miseries, because they have attained the highest perfection.'

The understanding of this science, the very intellectual understanding, gives the inspiration to experience truth and naturally leads us to the ultimate Truth.

Here Krishna says, 'If you achieve this state, you never come back.' He inspires us; He persuades us to enter that state, to enter thoughtless awareness.

The only job of an enlightened master is to make everyone realize the truth that he himself has experienced. That is the only aim. There is no ulterior motive.

People again and again look at an enlightened master with suspicion. They suspect foul play. Understand one thing: A person who remains at the inner source of bliss never cares for anything external. Please understand that he does not need external sources of happiness because he has something more powerful. The inner guide is so powerful that the being is always blissful.

That is the reason he does not see the world as a collection of miseries. You see, an enlightened master may not get food for days, yet he is always blissful. Even in such situations, the only things that he experiences are gratitude and compassion.

He is neither attached to sorrow nor to happiness. He is detached from both to the same degree.

He is always in a state of gratitude to the universe. Worldly things do not affect him. Happiness and sorrow are not in his dictionary.

A small story:

The Sufi master, Javed paid gratitude to God five times a day. Once he and his followers were wandering through several villages where Sufism was not accepted as a religion.

In the first village, people accused them of begging, and threw meager alms at them. In the next village, the people refused to give them any alms.

On the third day, the village they visited was so hostile that the villagers drove them out with sticks and stones.

That night as usual, the master knelt down and offered gratitude to God. His disciples watched. It was too much for them. They could not understand why their master was thanking God when they were hungry, thirsty and miserable. They were furious.

They cried out, 'Master! For three days we have gone without food! Today we were driven out of that village like dogs! Is this what you offer gratitude for?'

Their master looked at them and said, 'You talk about three days of hunger! What about all that you have received till now? Have you thanked God for the food you have received for the past thirty years? And know this,

my gratitude is not based on receiving or not receiving anything. It is an expression of deep joy and love in my being; it is a choiceless and prayerful expression, that's all.'

An enlightened master looks at misery and happiness with total gratitude and surrender to the universe. Enlightened beings are beyond happiness as you understand it. They are not attached to anything. They are pure compassion.

One more thing, an enlightened being surrenders everything that he has and gets, to Existence. When he gets food, he surrenders that; when he is hungry for days, he surrenders that to Existence. Whether he has money or is in poverty, he is rich inside because he surrenders everything.

He says, 'Let Existence take care.' All his responsibilities are handed over to Existence. There is a great relief inside when that state of surrender happens. We suddenly light up in joy.

We consider something as misery because we think we are responsible for that something. We think we control it. That is why, when something does not happen according to our expectations, we see it as misery.

But an enlightened being is not like that. He simply flows. Whatever comes, he accepts it and surrenders it to Existence. In the next verse, Krishna talks about the misery-filled world and we see how good deeds cannot get us out of the cycle of birth and death.

Krishna says here:

'From the highest planet of *Brahmaloka* in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death takes place. But one who attains Me, one who attains My being, one who attains My consciousness, never takes birth again.'

I told you earlier about the different energy layers. Even if we reach the cosmic layer of *Brahmaloka*, the land of the Divine, we must come back and take birth again. It means that even if we are full of good intentions and good deeds, even if we are attached to good things, we must come back into a body.

Please be very clear, even if we are caught in doing good deeds, we return. Our good deeds, *punya*, cannot give us enlightenment. I tell people, 'Even if you give money for my ashram, I cannot give you a speed pass to enlightenment!' I

cannot give you any speed pass. Be very clear, unless *you* have the conscious glimpse, unless *you* achieve at least one moment of thoughtless awareness, nobody can save you from the cycle of birth and death.

Some people believe that when they give money to institutions, they receive a receipt and a pass to heaven. The receipt is kept with them when they die. They are buried with the receipt so that they can show the receipt to the gatekeeper of heaven and he will let them in!

I tell you honestly that at least I don't have such a system with this institution. Let me be very clear!

I never tell people, 'Do charity and good acts and I can get you into heaven.' Do things out of love and gratitude with no attachment, and you will be in heaven as a result of your mental setup. Do it out of gratitude, just for the sake of doing it, not expecting that tomorrow you will be given a special place in heaven.

I tell people, 'Even if you give money to my ashram, I cannot give you any speed pass; nothing can be done. This is the honest truth.' People ask, 'Then why do you build ashrams and temples?' I build them because they are laboratories where the spiritual sciences can be practiced. Ashrams and temples are places where spiritual science is analyzed, where people study great truths; where people imbibe these truths and practice them in their lives. They are inner-science laboratories.

All over the world I build temples and ashrams as inner science laboratories where these things can be practiced, where these things can be studied, where these things can be analyzed and where people will understand this science. Do charity and good acts with the consciousness that you are engaged in research in the inner sciences in these laboratories, just as the *ṛsis* of the great *vedic* tradition did. Don't do it for some special ticket to heaven.

Don't expect that if we do these things for Lord Vishnu, He will send a special flight with a *garuḍa* (eagle) emblem when we leave the body, and the airhostesses, Rambha, Menaka and Urvashi (celestial beauties), will take us there. Nothing of that sort happens!

If we expect these things to happen, we will sit, sit, sit and wait. Nobody will come and no such thing will happen! Be very clear, whether we acquire sin or merit, we suffer when we leave the body. Whether it is sin or merit, both are *karma*.

Then what is to be done? When we live in the body, at least once, in one way or another, by meditating or by surrender, experience one glimpse of thoughtless awareness.

Work intensely for it, for at least one glimpse of thoughtless awareness, the witnessing consciousness. If we achieve one glimpse, it's over. That one glimpse acts like a torch, a conscious torch, and guides us through these seven layers when we leave the body. We will walk beautifully; we will slide through all seven layers. That acts as a torch of consciousness that guides us through this path, through this life.

If we achieve that one glimpse of consciousness, we achieve what has to be achieved. If we have not had that, whatever we achieve is a pure waste. All merits and sins - nothing comes with us. We will not be judged by anything except this glimpse of *samādhi*, the ultimate truth. *Samādhi* in Sanskrit means: being in our original state. Once we realize this state, we have arrived.

Again and again Vivekananda says, 'If you achieve even a single glimpse, you leave your body in that experience.' It is because this intense experience of Self-realization will come up at the time when we leave the body. At the time of death, our whole life is played back to us in a fast-forward mode in a few seconds. And only the important scenes appear in multicolor again and again; all other scenes appear in black and white. They become the background. If we have had thoughtless awareness, the *samādhi* experience when we were alive, that alone will appear in multicolor; all other things will fade away in the background.

And naturally, we stay in that state and leave the body. One more thing - if there is a scratch on a videotape, the tape gets stuck in that place when it runs in fast-forward mode, is it not? So when the fast-forward happens, the remainder of the tape is erased. Similarly, thoughtless awareness is the *stuck* point in our life because in that space we never had a thought. We will be stuck there and whatever fast-forward happens beyond that, all the *karma* associated with it will be erased, washed away!

It is like a virus entering our software; the more we try to operate the software, the more the virus destroys the software. Similarly, thoughtless awareness is the divine virus for our *samsāra sagara* - ocean of worldly life, for our desires, for the software that is our mind. Our mind is the software. Our mind is just a pre-programmed software.

Please be very clear, don't think that the mind is intelligence. The mind is just a programmed software. For example, let us say we experience anxiety every morning

because of office-related worries. Gradually, every morning at 10 am, we experience a low mood. The funny thing is, eventually we start experiencing the same depression even on the weekend when there is no office to attend!

If we are a little aware and sensitive, if we observe ourselves, we will see that this is true. How many of you have experienced this? If we have observed ourselves, we would have experienced this at least a few times. Then we tell our mind, 'No, this is the weekend. I don't need to go to the office. I don't need to think about those things.' But every weekend, our mind goes back to the same mood because our mind is a pre-programmed software.

Thoughtless awareness is a benign virus, if such a thing exists! The more we work with the software after the virus has entered, the more the software and programs will be destroyed. Similarly, if we have one glimpse of consciousness in our lifetime, this glimpse takes over our being at the time of leaving the body, and the whole software is completely erased.

We do not have to take another birth. There will be no need to take the next birth. We assume the body and mind only if we believe there is something to be enjoyed or achieved through the body and mind. Unless we believe there is some enjoyment to be found downtown, will we go downtown? We will not. Unless there is some work downtown, we will not go there. Similarly, unless we believe there is something to be achieved or enjoyed through this body and mind, we do not come down to planet earth.

When we are in this body, if we work on our engraved memories, *samskāras*, and come out of them, we will liberate ourselves from their influence, and hence from the cycle of re-birth.

Actually, Krishna speaks in a detailed manner on these issues. We will cover those chapters later.

Actually, you do not normally become aware of these memories, *samskāras*. So we take you through techniques to uncover them first. You write down and analyze all that has happened in your life and all that you have stored in the various energy layers that the spirit will pass through when it leaves the body-mind system. You analyze: What is the root of your desires? Which of these are superficial desires? What are your own desires? Which desires have been imposed on you by others? What are your basic needs, for fulfilling which, you carry your own energy, and what are your borrowed wants?

For instance, guilt is initially imposed on us by society. Later we master the art of creating guilt and continue to create it for ourselves! First society teaches us; then we master the art. Next, pain and suffering. Society creates a scale deciding what pain is and what suffering is. We then actually turn our whole life into suffering by measuring it with that scale. In the workshop, we work deeply on these things - on every emotion related to engraved memories or *saṁskāras*.

In a later chapter called *Guṇatraya Vibhāga yoga*, Krishna speaks thoroughly about these things. *Guṇatraya* means the three natural attributes we are born with, the *guṇas* - *satva*, *rajas* and *taṁas*. He speaks deeply on these. At that time we will work on these engraved memories. Then we will see every detail of how they stop us from progressing. And when we work on them, when we clear them, we will see that our whole life will be transformed.

One more thing we need to understand is that this science is not only for dying but also for living! If we are stuck with guilt, we can never enjoy our desires. When we don't enjoy our desires, we create more guilt, that's all. When we are stuck in guilt, we will not leave the desires and they cannot leave us. When we don't leave our desires, we create more guilt. This becomes a vicious circle.

So not only for dying, even for living we need to learn this whole science. As of now, understand this one thing: Throughout this chapter Krishna conveys the single message: experience His consciousness, the thoughtless awareness or the witnessing consciousness in which Krishna stays and plays the whole game of life, how He lives through the whole of life. That is why Krishna's life is called *līla* - cosmic play; *Krishna līla*. It is not history. It is *līla*; it is a cosmic play.

For ordinary human beings, after they die, their life will be written as history. For incarnations, their life itself is a script that has already been written; they just come down and enact it, that's all! For them it is a script; for us it is history. For us, after we die, somebody may write about us if we have achieved something! For the great masters, it is a script. They come with the script and enact the whole thing. They play the whole game. That is why their life is called *līla*. If we achieve the witnessing consciousness, our whole life becomes *līla*. We know the script and we are ready. When we know the script our whole life is a *līla*. When we don't know the script, it becomes history.

Krishna conveys one thing: All we need to do is work to achieve a glimpse of thoughtless awareness. In the next few chapters, He speaks deeply, intensely about

how to open every layer, how to progress, how to clean every layer and how to achieve the conscious glimpse or thoughtless awareness.

He says further:

‘By human calculation, the thousand ages taken together form the duration of Brahma’s one day, and such also is the duration of his night.’

As I told you, one year for us is one day for the *devatas*, demigods. For Brahma, a thousand ages are taken as one day. Only when we achieve the consciousness of *nirvāṇa* – thoughtless awareness, will we not take re-birth. Here He says a beautiful thing about *kṣaṇa*.

Let me explain the concept of *kṣaṇa* again. Let us understand this concept so that we appreciate what Krishna says in this verse.

Kṣaṇa means the gap between one thought and the next thought. It varies from person to person as each one’s frequency of thoughts is different. As I told you earlier, at the time of death, our soul has three *kṣaṇas* to take another body. Three *kṣaṇas* can be three nanoseconds, three microseconds, three seconds or three minutes or three hundred years according to the person’s frequency of thoughts. It depends on his state of mind. If the mind is filled with restlessness and so too many thoughts, the gap between thoughts will be less. If the mind is calm, with fewer thoughts, the gaps between thoughts will be more.

If we have lived a restless life, running and running, our *kṣaṇas* will be in microseconds. It will not even be in seconds. If we have lived a peaceful, blissful life and achieved at least one glimpse of thoughtless awareness, our *kṣaṇa* can be even two or three hundred years. Our *kṣaṇa* can extend to two or three hundred years, because it is the gap between one thought and the next thought. If we can stop the next thought from happening within our inner space, our *kṣaṇa* can be increased to any extent. It can extend to eternity.

So *kṣaṇa* is relative and not absolute. It depends on our state of mind and not on the amount of time passing on the clock. Please understand that the concept of time is psychological and not chronological here.

A small example shows that time is actually not chronological, but psychological. If we sit with a friend with whom we are comfortable, joyful and blissful, after three or four hours, we suddenly notice the time and say, ‘Oh! Three or four hours have passed? I don’t know how the time has passed by so quickly!’ At the same time, if we sit with somebody with whom we don’t feel comfortable, what

will we do? We will look at the watch and think, 'Why is the watch not moving? Is there a problem with it? The time is simply dragging on.'

Time is therefore psychological, not chronological. The number of thoughts that happen in our mind decides the time consciousness. If thoughts are less, even after ten hours, we will not feel that ten hours have passed. If the number of thoughts is more, two or three minutes will seem like years.

A small story:

A lady goes to the doctor for a check-up. After a thorough examination, the doctor says, 'I'm sorry. I have bad news. You may live only six months more at the most.'

She says, 'What is this? What should I do now?'

The doctor says, 'I have one suggestion. Marry an accountant.'

She asks, 'Will that cure me?'

He says, 'No, no. But then the six months will seem very long.'

You see, at the most, we can extend time psychologically. And when it happens, it is what we call 'eternal hell'. The word 'eternal' is not chronological. If it were, then it would not be justified. Even if we make all possible mistakes in a hundred years, how can we be punished in eternal hell? It actually means, for one hundred years' mistakes, we get one hundred years' hell. But those hundred years seems eternal because of the crowd of thoughts. Because of the number of thoughts, time will not seem to move.

To calculate time, we say that one year of human life equals one day of the *devatas*, demigods, because their thoughts per second (TPS) is very less. Because their TPS is less, one year for us is one day for them. That is why the deity Nataraja in the temple at Chidambaram in South India, has only six prayer offerings throughout the year. In one year, they worship the deity only six times! Normally, the worship is carried out six times a day in other temples. But this temple is supposed to be where the *devatas* worship the Divine, so the worship is carried out according to their time!

The six offerings of worship required for the deity are conducted in our one year because our one year is one day for the deities or *devatas*. *Devatas* refers to those whose TPS has come down, who have had a glimpse of *samādhi*. If our TPS is

low, we too are in heaven. If our TPS is high, we are in hell. Heaven always looks brief; hell always looks eternal, because of the number of thoughts.

When we are in the body, if we have had a single glimpse of thoughtless awareness - the experience of meditation, then automatically this consciousness comes up at the time of leaving the body, and we will have two benefits. We can choose to become enlightened and not take another birth, or we can choose the right place to express and work out our *karma*, to live as we want. We have both choices if we experience thoughtless awareness while living.

Q: You said that the mind is a collection of thoughts. If thoughtless awareness is to happen, this means that the mind must disappear. Normally, we look at the disappearance of the mind as death. Does this mean that when we experience samādhi, we die?

Beautiful question!

Yes, you are absolutely correct. The state of *samādhi*, enlightenment or thoughtless awareness, is the same as a death experience. You do not leave the body yet, that is the only difference. You leave the mind, and the mind that you return to is not the same mind as the one that you left.

The path of yoga, as well as the path of meditation, which is one part of yoga, lead you towards this state - the experience of no-mind and no-thoughts. Yoga is usually defined as union, union of mind, body and spirit. It is explained that the end result of such union is the *samādhi* experience, where the integration of mind, body and spirit leads to the 'no-mind' or 'no-body' experience. But actually, yoga is 'uniting', the process of uniting, rather than the achievement of union. There is no end result to yoga, there is nothing to achieve, because we do not reach a new state. We only realize that state which we are in, have always been in, that is all. We become aware of who we are, and aware that it is our original state. Yoga therefore, is the path and not the goal.

When we focus on the process instead of an end result or goal, we will have no expectations and we can be detached about what happens at the end of the path. It is the experience of the path that matters. The bliss that we experience during this path is the experience of realization, *samādhi*.

That is why I have said many times that Ashtaanga Yoga of sage Patanjali is not about eight serial steps or parts to yoga as commonly understood. Yoga has eight

limbs or eight approaches. Any of these approaches can be the right path for us. Each can lead us into that experience, which is the experience of the journey.

If we get caught in the dilemma of traveling the path as well as reaching a destination, neither the path nor the destination will be enjoyable or right. In fact, there is no right destination. There is no right destination because there is no template for Self-realization or enlightenment.

Samādhi is a unique experience that is special to each person. It is true that the experience may seem the same. However, the expression of that experience is unique and different. That is why it is said that no two masters will speak about Truth in the same manner, and if they do, one of them is surely not enlightened! Each master's expression is different!

Yes, you die when you realize yourself. All your accumulated memories, conditioned experiences, the collective judgments that you have learned to make, all your negativities, all the regrets of the past, all the expectations of the future, all your fear and greed, all these die as you realize the true state of your being. As I said before, a benign virus reboots you and reprograms you. You come out as a different person from the one who went in.

In this state, thoughts are no longer needed. Thoughts may arise, as and when needed, and you act as needed. There is no attempt on your part to connect thoughts with one another, creating pain and pleasure shafts. This is the game that we play now. We link experiences to one another, and link the emotional conditions of those experiences to one another, so that a running script of joy or suffering is created.

All this joy and suffering is a mere psychodrama. It is play-acting. No such joy or suffering exists. Each thought and each experience is momentary, impermanent, independent and valid only for that situation. By making the association between them, we create joy and suffering; actually only suffering, since even joy ultimately results in suffering.

Mind and body are material representations of our spirit, which is pure energy. When we realize ourselves at the *samādhi* state, we touch this pure energy base, our real permanent state. This is the state beyond birth and death. But the permanent state becomes the state *between* birth and death for most people, who are caught in the bondage of *samsāra*, the cycle of birth and death, instead of being the state while they are living.



My Supreme Abode

8.19 Again and again the day comes, and this host of beings is active;

And again the night falls, O son of Pritha, and they are automatically annihilated.

8.20 Yet there is another nature, which is eternal and is beyond this manifested and unmanifest matter.

It is supreme and is never annihilated. When all in this world is annihilated, that remains the same.

8.21 That supreme abode is said to be unmanifest and indestructible and is the supreme destination.

When one gains this state one never comes back. That is My supreme abode.

8.22 Son of Pritha, the supreme person, who is greater than all, is attainable by undeviating devotion.

Although He is present in His abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him.

Krishna explains how transient this material world is. During a single 'blink of Brahma' - the Lord of creation, so many things change. In our concept of time, we see things as permanent, but when we operate in a different zone of space and time, all this becomes temporary.

Our ignorance makes us think that all that we see is real and permanent. Once we understand that this entire life and the world around us is impermanent, we see everything from a completely different angle. Why do we run behind material things? Why do we again and again want to possess things?

In our concept of time and space, we see material things as permanent. We think we can control them. We want to have ownership over everything that is available. And the problem is everyone wants the same thing! Everyone fights to take charge of the same thing. We are like cats fighting over a piece of bread.

One more thing you should know: we fight to catch hold of this body. We want to hold onto this body for as long as we can. Even at sixty or seventy, many people go in for plastic surgery. They do things to look young. Why? They do not want to accept the truth that the body is impermanent.

When you look around, you see that the earth is stationary. It is not moving. When you look from the moon, you see the earth moving. When you go beyond the moon, you see that the moon also moves.

Once we raise ourselves to higher dimensions, we see the actual truth. As long as we limit ourselves to this space, we think the earth is stationary. When we change our concept of space and time, when we change our reference point in space and time, we realize that all we think of as permanent, all that we think is ours is not permanent. It is continuously being created and destroyed.

This is what Krishna says. We believe in a concept of finite time and limited space and we cling to that without realizing what is beyond this dimension.

We are greedy to accumulate more and more material pleasures because we see them as real and permanent. We think they will stay with us forever. That is one side. On the other side we fear that they will be taken away from us. We are always in a state of fear.

Both these - greed and fear - are the main sources of our misery. We run and run. We run, not for the joy of running, but because greed makes us run towards something that we want to possess, and fear makes us run away from something that seems to take away our possessions.

When we live in bondage to fear and greed, we continuously build *saṁskāras*. We create more and more desires. First of all, we are not trying to fulfill our true desires or *prārabdha karma*. Then on top of that, we build a whole new set of desires.

Why are we doing this? Simply because, in our concept of time and space, we think things are permanent. We think we own them and we should take care of them and control them.

When we understand that at higher dimensions, all that we see is destroyed and created continuously, we realize the futility of holding onto things, even our own body.

Krishna says that in all this creation and destruction, only one thing is neither created nor destroyed, and that is the 'ultimate consciousness'! Please be very clear, what we think of as an age is a fraction of a second to Brahma and everything we see as permanent is being made and destroyed every time Brahma blinks. Do not analyze the literal meaning of this. Do not analyze how it is possible. Do not worry about how many hours, how many seconds make one day of Brahma? Do not worry about what is Brahma's time or what is Vishnu's time or what is Shiva's time or Krishna's time. Krishna refers to the concept of time and space as it exists in the ultimate consciousness, and as an enlightened master experiences it.

Appreciate the deeper meaning. Understand that whatever we see is transient. Nothing is permanent. It is like putting our hand in a river and trying to hold the water in our hand. What happens? The river flows past, and our hand is empty. Once we realize this truth, our whole idea about time and space will change. We will see everything around us in a different way and understand the futility of the rat race.

I mentioned the seven layers that the spirit travels through at the time of death. The first four layers are related to the physical body-mind system. They store emotionally laden memories: engrams related to desires, guilt and pain experienced during that lifetime. The fifth layer is experienced during deep sleep and when leaving the body. The sixth layer is associated with happy memories and the seventh layer is beyond sorrow and happiness; it is the ultimate consciousness. All descriptions of heaven and hell in many religions are nothing but whatever the spirit experiences when it travels through these layers of painful and happy memories.

Please understand, even attachment to happy memories brings us back into the cycle of birth and death. It is not enough if we transcend pains and sufferings alone. Understand that happy incidents are also temporary, and try to move beyond them. Otherwise, the desire to experience more and more similar happy, joyful incidents will pull us back and we will take more births!

The secret to liberation is what Krishna gives here – 'One who attains My abode will never return.' The abode where one will not return to refers to the state of the being when it transcends joys and sorrow.

Krishna again and again talks about focusing one's thoughts on the Divine. The only way to think of the Divine at the time of our death is by thinking about Him

all the time. I told you how much pain and suffering our soul goes through at death. We have seen how the soul passes through the energy layers.

At that time, we suddenly cannot think of God. In such pain and suffering, we suddenly can't think of God if we have always been thinking about money and food in our life. It is impossible.

That is why Krishna insists upon continuous devotion to the Supreme. When we live in a state of continuous devotion, our last thought will be of the Divine. Please be very clear about this: Our last thought determines our next birth. There is no doubt about it.

When we continuously think about God, we understand the truth that everything around us is Him. When we are continuously in that meditation, we see Krishna in everything around us.

You see, thousands of thoughts come to us every minute. Let as many thoughts as possible be of God. We do not need to reduce the number of thoughts. Let the thoughts be of God. Let us immerse ourselves in thinking about the supreme soul. This purifies our inner space.

Throughout the day, how many times do we think of God? Maybe before a meal, or before going to bed. Otherwise, its only when we face some problem, that we think of God! But how many times do we think of some film actress or actor? Everything in the newspapers, on television or on the internet is about something with which we are not really connected. We take many such things into our system, and all our thoughts revolve around them.

Out of thousands of thoughts, less than one percent is probably related to God. Everything else is related to something external. Please be very clear, every thought is energy and we waste more than ninety nine percent of our energy on something that is not really needed for us. If we can channel this energy to look inward, to see the source of our existence, we explore a new dimension of our Self.

We are ready to do anything other than think about God or our Self. Why? We think it is a waste of time. We always make business plans. We do something only if we feel we will get something from it. But if we analyze our thoughts carefully, we are not thinking of anything productive. Our thoughts are simply completely illogical.

Most of the time, we justify ourselves when someone asks us to think of God. We say, 'Why think of God? What will we get? I have better things to think about

like work and my studies.’ However these are mere justifications. If we sit and write down our thoughts, we will see that we are not thinking about work or anything productive. Our thoughts are completely illogical and random.

So why not think about God? We feel thinking about God does not give us any immediate results. But be very clear, when we are completely immersed in thoughts of God, our inner space is cleared. We are preparing our Self. At the time of death, these thoughts will liberate us. Constantly thinking about God helps when our soul passes through the energy layers at the time of death.

Q: Swamiji, you always tell us to celebrate the happiness, the blissful nature in us. Does it not contradict your saying that we should transcend joys as well?

Please understand, there is a big difference between bliss and happiness. As long as an external object is the cause for an emotion, it cannot be bliss. Bliss is like a fountain that continuously happens inside you for no reason. Actually, as small children we allowed this fountain of bliss to happen inside us. Gradually, in the process of growing up, we learned how to put a stopper on this fountain.

Let me explain with an example. Let’s say you like a sweet very much. Now, if there is a desire to eat that sweet, constantly there are thoughts related to that desire in your mind. The minute you put the sweet in your mouth, you experience a sense of calmness inside. Suddenly, that inner restlessness about wanting to eat it subsides. That is why you feel a sense of joy.

Now what do we do? We associate that joy with the sweet. It is actually that brief moment of stillness inside that you experience as beautiful joy. But we think that the sweet is responsible for making us happy. If that were the case, every time we want to feel happy, we can eat that sweet. Over! It can be a solution for our depression. But will that work? No! That is not true.

After two or three servings of the sweet, our body starts to reject it, however much we like the sweet. If we eat a dozen at a time, we will not want to see that sweet ever again! The sweet does not carry joy for us at all any more. The joy was actually because of something that happened *inside* when we ate it the first time. The restfulness that happened inside upon tasting it the first time is the key to the joy. It has nothing to do with the sweet.

The same applies to all so-called ‘happy’ incidents in our life. Some external object triggered us to enter the same blissful space inside. However, remember that the

space we experience is because of the space that we are in, and not because of the external object. That is the difference between happiness and bliss. Meditation is the technique to enter and remain in this space without any external stimulus.

We should understand the difference between a *yogi*, a detached spiritual being, and a *bhogi*, an enjoyer of the material world. *Bhogis* are engrossed in enjoying the outer world and running behind the outer world because they think that the source of happiness lies outside. But we can never find a single *bhogi* who is satisfied in the end. A *yogi* knows that the source of bliss is inside. He does not waste time and effort in running behind sense objects. He realizes the futility of it. He enjoys bliss without much effort.

Please be very clear, a *yogi* and a *bhogi* search for the same bliss. The *yogi* knows where to look for it whereas the *bhogi* does not know. If the *bhogi* is smart, he realizes after some time that his search is not bringing what he wants and he turns to search in the correct place. Because we do not actually know what causes bliss, we go after the wrong things. We chase the material world for this bliss, which is inside.

A small story:

Once a man was traveling by ship for the first time. He was searching for his cabin. He was not able to find it and was completely lost.

Finally he approached a steward for help.

The steward asked, 'What is the name of your cabin, sir?'

The man replied, 'I don't know the name. But I know one thing; it has a lighthouse outside the porthole.'

This is what we do! We catch on to the wrong things! We do not know what we are searching for. We are actually searching for bliss but we search in the name of material possessions, relationships, achievements and so on. Soon, we forget why we started the search. But one thing is sure - we are busy searching for something!

We run behind material objects thinking that they give bliss; we are so conditioned to associate bliss with external objects. We cannot accept that the same bliss can be experienced without objects. After a while we forget that we are searching for bliss and hold onto the objects instead.

As long as we associate happiness with objects in this world, liberation is impossible. Even *devata*, the demigods who enjoy heavenly pleasures, are not truly

liberated. This is what Krishna says here. Only when we go beyond the joys and sorrows of life do we realize the space that Krishna refers to as His abode.

It is a no-return zone. He says, 'When one gains this state, he never comes back. That is My supreme abode.'

What do we love most in our life, without which we cannot survive? Our body! You see, we love our body so much. Throughout our life we enjoy through this body. At the time of death, there is a struggle between body and spirit. The spirit does not want to leave the body because it cannot think of life without a body. And the body has become worn out or lost its usefulness. It cannot host the spirit anymore. In this struggle, the being undergoes a lot of pain.

But if the being has tasted the space where it can exist without the body and mind, it becomes liberated. When the spirit leaves the body, there will be no pain. It does not struggle to hold onto the body because it has experienced bodiless awareness. It merges with the cosmic intelligence. It never wants to take another body again. The body and mind become unnecessary burdens for it. Why should it carry a body and mind when it can happily survive without them? The being then merges with the cosmic consciousness and is liberated from the cycle of birth and death.



Passing In Light

8.23 O best of the Bharata, I shall now explain to you the different times

When passing away from this world, one returns or does not return.

8.24 Those who pass away from the world during the influence of the fire god, during light, at an auspicious moment, during the fortnight of the waxing moon and the six months when the sun travels in the north,

*And those who have realized the supreme **Brahman** do not return.*

8.25 The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon, or the six months when the sun travels in the south,

Having done good deeds, goes to the cosmic layer and returns.

8.26 According to the Vedas, there are two ways of passing from this world – one in light and one in darkness.

When one passes in light, he does not return; but when one passes in darkness, he returns.

In these few verses, Krishna describes at what time one can achieve enlightenment, how one can achieve enlightenment and how to reach that state. He also talks about how people come back into this cycle of birth and death.

He says:

Those who know the supreme Divine attain that Supreme by passing away from the world during the influence of Agni, the fire-god, during light or at an auspicious moment of the day, also during the fortnight of the waxing moon or during the six months that the sun travels in the north, referred to as *uttarāyaṇam*.

Please understand that these are not chronological calendars. If it were a chronological calendar, then at *uttarāyaṇam* time, all of us can commit suicide and be done with it, that's all!

But that is not what is meant here. All these things have metaphorical meanings. When He says *uttarāyaṇam*, He means when our mind is totally balanced. He means the time when our mind is totally balanced and when we are not agitated. In the Mahabharata war that is described in the Hindu epic Mahabharata, it is said that Bhishma waits for *uttarāyaṇam* to leave the body. Don't think he waited for January. He waited until his mind settled down from the agitations.

He had fallen in battle and was lying down on a bed made of arrows. He must have felt agitated. He must have felt, 'My grandson, whom I taught everything, for whom I did everything, did this to me.' Of course, he must have thought these things in his mind and become agitated. He would have been disturbed. So he waited until the agitation settled down. That is what is meant by the words, 'he was waiting for *uttarāyaṇam*.'

Don't think these are chronological concepts. They are psychological. If it were chronological, then do you think that the millions of people who die in those six months become enlightened? Enlightenment is not an accident! It is a pure conscious choice.

So be very clear, when He says *agnir jyotirah suklaḥ*, He means if we are conscious... *agnir jyotirah*... means when your being is conscious... when your being is fully alive, awakened, naturally you go up. (*suklaḥ* means going above, *krishna* means going down)

One more important thing: If we live throughout life centered on the eyes, our energy leaves through the eyes. At the last moment, we open the eyes and the soul leaves. If we live throughout life centered on the tongue, eating, our mouth opens and the soul leaves through it. So if we live throughout life centered on higher consciousness, our energy leaves through the *sahasrāra*, the crown *cakra*, the energy center on the top of our head.

Krishna says *brahma brahmavido janah*. He means that if we have always lived with our attention focused towards higher consciousness, we will travel in that path and disappear into *Brahman*. We will become enlightened.

So be very clear, these conditions are not chronological. They are psychological. Bhishma waited until his mind settled. He waited until he felt completely peaceful,

till he was able to forgive everybody and till he was able to reach conscious awareness. Then he entered enlightenment.

Next, Krishna says that the person who passes away from this world during smoke, the night, the fortnight of the waning moon or those six months when the Sun travels in the south, referred to as *dakṣiṇāyanam*, reaches the Moon but comes back again.

Again, this is not chronological but psychological. They can't say that in these six months nobody can become enlightened. They can't say, 'During the six months of *dakṣiṇāyanam* the enlightenment gates are locked, no entry. Only at *uttarāyaṇam* time, the gates are open. Come at that time.' No! They can't say, '*Dakṣiṇāyanam* time is non-working hours and only *uttarāyaṇam* time is working hours.' There are no working hours for enlightenment. It is purely because of the conscious choice of one's being.

Krishna says that according to the *Vedas*, there are two ways to pass from this world: one in light and one in darkness. When one passes in light, he does not return, but when one passes in darkness, he comes back again.

What does Krishna mean by light and darkness? They refer to the levels of consciousness one has reached. If a person leaves the body without knowing what drove him all along - his *saṁskāras*, his desires, fears, guilt, etc., which we call engrams - then this ignorance is what He refers to as darkness.

When we become aware of these and are free from them, we leave the body and become liberated. This is what He means by light. He says that when this happens, the being does not return to the body.

Q: Swamiji, can bringing in awareness about an engram dissolve the engram?

Most of the time, having awareness is good enough to handle these things. For example, you are guilty about something you did in the past. Normally, we do not know that there is a guilt bothering us. Now, if you don't know that this guilt is bothering you, how do you tackle the problem? The minute you look inside and understand all that is happening, once you get to know the engrams inside, you can watch the effect that all the desires, fears, guilt, pain, etc., have on you.

Whenever you witness, there is a sudden separation between you and the engram. If you are able to look fear in the eye, that fear drops. For any fear, this holds true. Witness it with full awareness. Then the fear stroke will not even

happen. The minute fear starts to rise within you, if you analyze what is happening, it drops. It loses its power on you. It is the same with any other engram.

A small story:

This happened when I was a small boy. I was about ten years old. In Tiruvannamalai, my hometown, there is a beautiful hill called Arunachala. That hill is like an energy hub, a spiritual incubator that has produced many enlightened masters.

One day I took my customary walk around the hill. It was pitch dark, as it was late in the night.

There is a burial ground that I had to cross. Normally, a boy of that age would have been scared to venture out at night in that area! As I was approaching the burial ground, from a distance a dog started to bark at me. I did not bother. I continued to walk.

Then, when I came close to it, the dog ran away. As I came to the spot where the dog had been, I found that the dog had been chewing on a dead body. It had not been buried properly.

At this point, I clearly saw fear rising inside me. I simply witnessed the fear rising with full awareness. Even as it arose, the fear subsided! The awareness was so high that it didn't become a fear stroke. I clearly saw it lose power over me. It no longer bothered me. I looked at the dead body, smiled peacefully and continued to walk.

The mere awareness of the fear engram and the conscious decision to face it dissolved the engram.



Be Fixed In Devotion

8.27 O son of Pritha, the devotees who know these different paths are never bewildered.

O Arjuna, be always fixed in devotion.

8.28 A person who accepts the path of devotional service transcends the results derived from studying the vedas, performing austerities and sacrifices, giving charity or pursuing pious and result-based activities.

At the end he reaches the supreme abode.

In the last few verses Krishna summarizes the essence of the whole chapter. He says, 'O son of Pritha, the devotees who know these different paths are never bewildered. Therefore O Arjuna, be always fixed in devotion.'

He means that a person who understands the different paths that a spirit can take while leaving the body will always be prepared for death. He immerses himself in devotion throughout his life so that he becomes liberated. Krishna first gives Arjuna an intellectual understanding of the whole death process. He clearly tells him that the last thought while leaving the body governs the path that the spirit chooses when entering the next body.

Again and again He emphasizes that this thought cannot be divine unless we spend our entire lives in devotional service. When I say devotional service, devotion is more important than service. I tell people, never give money in charity because some priest told you that it is a good thing. Never follow these rules blindly. I do not say, 'Don't do charity work.' I am only saying, 'Let it just be a natural expression of yourself, not with any expectation.'

We have a head to think with and a heart to feel with. We do not need to refer to society every time to decide what to do and what not to do. Another thing, do

not work in the name of 'devotional service' to please someone else or society. If you expect something in return, then be very clear, it is not devotional service. If it springs purely out of devotion, the act itself should be the reward.

A small story:

Bodhidharma goes to China. The King of China was devoted to Bodhidharma. The king did a lot to spread Buddhism in China. He built many temples and ashrams, and spent lots of money trying to get people to follow the path.

When Bodhidharma entered his palace, the king welcomed him and asked, 'Buddha, I have done so much to spread Buddhism in my country. What will happen when I die? Will I reach heaven?'

Bodhidharma replied, 'You will reach the worst hell.'

The king was shocked! What did he mean? Understand: The king's question contained an expectation of return for his charity. He did service hoping that Bodhidharma would recognize and reward him.

I tell people, every day for half an hour, just for half an hour, work without expecting anything in return. It could be anything. If you make a painting, don't calculate, 'Oh, how many people will appreciate this. How many paintings should I make so that I can start an art gallery?' Without such calculations, immerse yourself in some work for half an hour.

You will suddenly see a new space open up inside you. When you work without expecting anything in return, just for the joy of doing it, you will see how liberating it is. Gradually, when this becomes engrained in you, you will enjoy whatever you do much more. You will no more bother about who thinks what about you.

Krishna says, 'Performing austerities and sacrifices, giving charity or pursuing pious result-based activities will take a person to the supreme abode.'

While doing each of these activities, it is the attitude that matters most, not the action itself. I have seen people give money to temple priests out of fear and greed. They are told that if they don't give money, the gods will be angry. Or if they give money, their family will be protected. The attitude behind these actions is what counts. Krishna says, if one engages in activities with devotion, then He will be there at the time of one's death.

He has given intellectual knowledge until now. In the following chapters, He gives deeper level techniques to experience this truth, to experience thoughtless awareness by removing engrams, by removing engraved memories, by understanding our desires.

Let us pray to that ultimate energy, *Parabrahma* Krishna, to give us intelligence and the experience of thoughtless awareness, witnessing consciousness, *ātma jñāna*, the eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.

Thank you.

Q: Swamiji, you have spoken about the Life Bliss Program. Can you give more details about it and how it helps us in life?

Let me put it this way: Before I realized my Self, I probably had an option to spend the rest of my life in the Himalayan region in seclusion, pursuing what I considered my spiritual path. When enlightenment happened, I had no choice. I was clear that my mission, as dictated by that universal energy, was to convey to others my own experience so that they could achieve personal transformation.

It was crystal clear that I should take the message of personal transformation through meditation to the world and that was when my real journey began. It took a few years to put my understanding together and develop the teachings. Dhyanaapeetam, the spiritual laboratory, was the result.

In the beginning I talked about what people needed most in terms of managing their lives. I spoke about how they could cope with emotions. I explained how we are all an integral part of a living energy. This cosmic energy is reflected within us and can be experienced in the seven energy centers called *cakras*. When these *cakras* are blocked, we are in emotional distress, which in turn leads to physical distress.

Energization of our energy centers, *cakras*, was the focus and content of my first Life Bliss program. This was originally called Ananda Spurana Program in India. *Ānanda* is bliss and *spurana* refers to free flow. This program is designed to allow the bliss energy to flow freely once again within you. The technique to make this happen is meditation.

This is a program taught by teachers who are trained and personally ordained by me. Several tens of thousands of people all over the world have benefited from

this program, which is essentially a life solution process. We have a book titled *Guaranteed Solutions* that explains the content of the course, and the understanding that comes from reading this book solves many problems for people.

We now call this program Life Bliss Program Level 1. We have variations of this program to suit professionals and corporations as well, as many of the techniques are ideal stress busters.

*Thus ends the Eighth chapter of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, called as **Akṣara Brahma Yogaḥ**, of the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of Yoga, dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.*



Death: The Ultimate Liberation And A Cause For Celebration

Editor's note:

Nithyananda's father, Sri Nithya Arunachalananda attained enlightenment and left the body, what we call Maha Samādhi, on 12 November 2006. This is the account of a disciple present on that occasion.

It was the third and final day of the Ashtavakra Gita discourses in Bengaluru.

The topic that evening was **Enlightenment: Have it!** *Swamiji* expounded so authoritatively on the *sūtras* (aphorisms) of the boy sage, Ashtavakra. The mesmerized audience listened to the flow of words. It was suddenly interrupted by a coughing bout from *Swamiji*.

He asked for water, drank it, and continued talking.

There was another interruption. *Ayya* (Secretary to *Swamiji*, for Indian affairs) came flying onto the stage. He went behind the sofa and whispered something to Him. *Swamiji* covered the mic with his one hand, listened calmly to *Ayya* and made a facial gesture that seemed to convey, 'I'll take care' or something to that effect. The talk resumed. Then to the audience's utter consternation, he gestured to *Ayya* to come onstage again. More whispered confabulation followed. There was stillness and finality in *Swamiji's* body language. *Ayya* left, the talk continued and progressed to the end. The effect was electrifying. No one left his seat during the discourse. Spontaneous applause followed. Then the long serpentine queue for *Swamiji's* blessing started.

I sat in the balcony watching the flow of events. Little did I know that one soul had already taken the offer of enlightenment. As the long line of people was shortening, I went down to the entrance to take my allotted place. Just then *Ayya* came and said, '*Amma*, *Swamiji's* father has attained *mahāsamādhi* (final liberation).

All of us are leaving for Tiruvannamalai as soon as *Swamiji* finishes. Please round up all *ācāryas* (teachers) and healers and gather them at one place. At no point should your body language reveal what I have just now conveyed to you. *Swamiji* wants you to remain calm and act with spiritual maturity.'

That set the tone for the unimaginable events that followed. Enlightened beings are compassion incarnate. *Swamiji* blessed each and everyone in the queue taking as much time as he would in the normal course of events. After blessings, very smoothly *Swamiji's* car moved away with His mother beside Him in the center seat and His brothers occupying the rear seat. Mini buses were arranged for *ashramites*, healers and *ācāryas*. Barring a few people, most of them did not know where we were going. The ones who didn't know were delighted by the turn of events. They were traveling out of Bengaluru and would be in *Swamiji's* company... that was enough!

When we reached Tiruvannamalai, one of the *ashramites* stopped the bus, went down and picked up fresh garlands for us to place on the coffin. In the wee hours of the morning of 13th Nov 2006, the bus stopped at the entrance to Rajarajan Street where *Swamiji's* maternal parents lived. A passing thought struck me that young *Rajasekaran* had lived on *Rajarajan* street and was destined to be a *Rajasanyāsi*...*Raja* meaning King - royalty to the manner born. It looked like Existence had planned very meticulously. (*Swamiji's* original name was *Rajasekaran*) The orchestration was truly exquisite!

We got down quietly and in a single file walked solemnly into the house. *Swamiji* sat in the *veranda* (porch) with some male relatives. He radiated a serene calmness. The minute He saw us, He remarked about us, 'For the first time I see these people really serious!' And then He addressed us, 'Go inside. Pay respects. Be with my mother. See to it that no one disturbs her. I don't want anyone wailing and weeping and creating scenes.'

We stepped into the hall and saw a lot of people seated there. To the left of the main doorway was the glass coffin. One after the other, in a silent procession, we placed garlands on the coffin and paid respects. I looked at the face and found it to be utterly calm. It echoed the final relaxation. Somehow, I couldn't connect with the fact that this inert body was a living person to whom I had spoken just two days earlier in the ashram. I had bid him goodbye and said that we would see each other during *Jayanti* celebrations, *Swamiji's* birthday celebrations in December-January. In his usual manner, he invited me to Tiruvannamalai for the *Karthigai Deepam* festival... 'Ellarum vaango', 'all of you please come for the festival of lights.'

Yes, everyone came - but not for the festival. Little did we know that we had been invited for a celebration, the likes of which we had never seen in our lives before. I found the atmosphere to be strange. I couldn't put my finger on it. Then it suddenly dawned on me that no one was crying! Everyone sat quietly. I had witnessed many deaths in my family. The ambience had always been one of great grief. Wailing, shouting and calling out to the departed is the rule rather than the exception. And this was repeated with the arrival of every new relative.

I had no doubts that *Swamiji* was the single controlling factor.

We sat around *Amma* (*Swamiji's* mother) who was an inspiration to watch. She sat on the floor, next to the sofa in which *Swamiji* sat. There was an air of innocence and dignity in her demeanor. She aligned her wishes to whatever her son said. She exhibited a total childlike trust in Him. As she simply and beautifully put it: '*Swami ennodu irrukumpodu vera enna ma ennaku venum? Avar ellamay patthuparu, ma.*' (When *Swamiji* Himself is with me, what more can I ask for? He will take care of everything, *ma.*)

She showed a high level of spiritual maturity that is rare for a person, especially a woman born and brought up in a small, closed society.

I understood why *Swamiji* had chosen her to be His mother. He had mentioned that India's energy attracts higher-level beings and acts as the spiritual incubator for them when they descend on planet earth. In a similar way, I felt *Amma*, due to her extreme innocence and unshakeable spiritual strength was the womb, the incubator that had radiated the innate capacity to receive and nurture an enlightened being's exalted energy.

The whole day was suffused with an air of spiritual fervor. Even as people were trooping in to pay respects, the young ascetics, the *brahmacāris* of the ashram, looking so majestically resplendent, performed *pūjā* in *Swamiji's* presence and with His participation: *Guru pūjā*, *Vraja homa*, *Nitya kirtans*, *ārati* and other ceremonies, as directed by *Swamiji* Himself.

Swamiji explained, 'When *Ayya* came up on stage and informed me that my father was no more, I paused awhile and related to his energy. I clearly saw that before his death, my father had gone into an enlightened state and had stayed there for at least 21 minutes. He had attained *mahāsamādhi*, the great liberation! Then he had relaxed beautifully into the all-pervading consciousness. I told *Ayya* to relax and carry on with the necessary arrangements. In those few moments of relating, I did whatever had to be done at the initial stage for the soul to move on.

I had to take care of the people who had come for my blessings at the discourse. They too need me.'

Only a person in the *Paramahansa* (supreme) state can be so unattachedly compassionate and unconditionally available at all times for those who seek Him, no matter what the situation. In those few moments, the teachings of Ashtavakra - *you are by your nature unattached, renounced, liberated; you are the all-pervading, witnessing consciousness* - had been expressed through *Swamiji's* sheer body language.

The profound truths of the scriptures must be lived. Here, before our eyes was a living example. All of us - devotees, disciples, healers and *ācāryas* - were shown what it means to 'practice what you preach'. Masters do not teach. Their life is their teaching. If you are alert and awake around the master, you can learn within moments what years of poring over great philosophies cannot teach you.

Every now and then, *Swamiji* would go out, sit in the *veranda*, watch arrangements being made to receive people and speak with relations and friends. In those moments of reminiscing, he said with great fondness, 'My father was a V.I.P. (Very Important Person) in his own right in this town. Because of his innate generosity of spirit and his helping nature, he managed to have a great following. He was so considerate to everyone. Even the last moments he spent on planet earth have been done with care and consideration! In the same way that he did not disturb me when I was a mere boy on the spiritual path, so too in death he has chosen to cause me the least disturbance. In my busy schedule, I am relatively free for the next three days. He has chosen to rightly leave his body now! He could have gone when I was in America or during the *Ananda Ula* tour. What would have happened to all the programs, all the arrangements? Simply a beautiful soul! I have blessed him with the ultimate gift of enlightenment. His energy will never again be converted to matter. He has left his body smoothly, without pain. He is relaxed and relating with me. *Amma, nee kavalai padadhey, naa pathikirain.* (*Amma, you don't worry. I will take care.*)'

So saying, *Swamiji* stood up, walked to the glass coffin and very lovingly, with a beautiful smile on his face, blessed his father's body and energy. He would repeat this often, throughout the day.

The gentry of Tiruvannamalai were being exposed to the joyous dignity of death.

Hearing Him talk and watching His utterly relaxed, confident and authoritative body language, I realized we were sitting in a live classroom. He was living the

truths that He had spoken of on so many occasions, in all those meditation programs. He showed us the way to receive death, the way to handle the dead and the living. No book can give this understanding, this kind of confidence.

I understood why He was particularly careful to maintaining a deeply joyous atmosphere. Why was He insistent that no one should weep and wail? As far as my understanding goes, when the soul leaves the body it is essential that the atmosphere is light, suffused with spiritual understanding, awareness, and a mood of deep celebration. Then we make it easier for the soul to move on smoothly to the next dimension.

This is the greatest gift of love we can give to anyone. This is the ultimate act of selflessness.

When we cry, when we grieve, we create such a heavy atmosphere that the soul struggles to leave. We cause an obstruction. This is the greatest act of cruelty that we can commit. And all the while, we suffer from the misconception that if we weep, we tell the departed how much we love him.

Actually, if we look deeply and honestly within ourselves, we see that we cry for the loss, the void that the person's death has caused in *our* life. Because, if we appreciate that death is the climax of life and not the end, we too will celebrate with that understanding. Then where is the room for tears?

When evening, *sandhya kāl*, arrived, the *ārati* – the offering of lit camphor and wicks, was performed to the sound of tinkling bells and the rhythmic clapping of the gathering. Everyone participated with great fervor. I sat next to the coffin. Each time I turned my gaze to my left, I looked directly at the face. I was surprised that at no time did I feel disturbed by this physical proximity to the dead body. In fact, more often than not we forgot that the body was there. Though it was placed in the center of the room, it was not holding centerstage. There was no exhibition of grief or trace of morbidity to keep us focused on the body.

I realized that as *Swamiji* was constantly keeping the group occupied with some aspect of spirituality, the mind was diverted from its habitual pattern of response to such situations. Our energies, instead of being tight and confined to our boundaries through fear and grief, were expanding and relating to the high level of enlightened energy present in the room. The moment of death can be a process of deep alchemy for the dying and the living. Since this blessed soul had attained *samādhi*, the energy it radiated, combined with the powerful vibrations of an enlightened master's presence, had the power to transform all those tuned to it. This was exactly what *Swamiji* was working on.

He did not want us to miss this huge opportunity that Existence was offering us.

In between all these extraordinary activities, *Swamiji* kept the normalcy of day-to-day activities going. We went for breakfast, came back, drank coffee served with polite hospitality, and then got into vehicles and performed *giri-vala* (circumambulating Arunachala, the holy hill of Tiruvannamalai). We went for lunch, had a shower; in short, the ordinariness of day-to-day life carried on. This in no way showed disrespect to the departed soul.

On the contrary, it showed an extremely mature understanding that death was one more event in life. It could be as simple as changing our old, worn out clothes for something new. That act of changing is death, that's all. If, while living, we had learnt the art of changing then we would carry the same attitude with us while dying. If we wish to die well, all we have to do is learn to live well.

Live fully, moment to moment, as if each moment is our last one. Then there is no room for regrets. We will have the spiritual understanding that death is neither frightening nor fascinating, as some naively think. It is simply a fact of life, which creates a great opportunity for the most profound and beneficial inner experiences to happen. It carries with it the potentiality to be the moment of final illumination.

Early next morning, around 5.30 am, we gathered in the main hall. *Swamiji* asked that the body be given its final bath and draped in *kāvi vastra* (saffron cloth usually worn by *sanyāsis*). At that moment I remembered: Once when *Swamiji* was returning from a tour of South India, his father jokingly told his eldest son, who too had come to visit the ashram, '*seekaram vaa da... sami varadukulla namba kazhambalam...paatarna nambazhayum samiyara panniduvaru...*' (Come quickly. Let us leave the ashram before *Swamiji* arrives. Otherwise, if He sees us, He will make us also *sanyāsis*!) It looked like Existence has a great sense of humor. She had the last laugh. I am sure that *Swamiji's* father would have joined in the laughter.

I noticed that there had not been any change in the physical condition of the body. Death had arrived on 12th evening and now it was 14th morning. The body was as intact as it had been on the first day that we had seen it. No doubt it was kept on ice; yet not a single change had happened, considering the low level of sophistication of that glass coffin and the heat of Tiruvannamalai. The face radiated the same serenity; there was no odor of decay. The use of *agarbattis* (incense sticks) and room fresheners had stopped long ago.

I mused silently: Was it *Swamiji's* energy? Or was it the vibrations of the *pūja* and *ārati* performed at regular intervals? Or was it the group energy that was so

profoundly calm and elevating? Perhaps it was a direct reflection of the *samādhi* state into which Sri Arunachalananda had entered before leaving the body completely. The separated ego with all its sense-residues had been transformed and purified at the moment of the final exit. So there was no odor. Only lightness and the bliss of the liberated soul suffused the air that we were breathing. It could be all these aspects acting together. I honestly didn't know. This was not time to seek clarifications. That understanding will happen when the need arises, automatically, without any kind of seeking or prompting. And of course, my ego never got tired of musing.

Once the necessary rituals were completed, *Swamiji* asked everyone who was not a healer or *ācārya* to pay respects and leave the room. Then, closing the doors and windows firmly, He asked Sri Nithya Kirtanananda to play *ānanda darśan* music.

The room exploded to the beat of '*bomma bomma tha thaiya thaiya thaka...*' with everyone singing and clapping. *Swamiji* danced joyously, throwing tremendous energy all around. There was a great buildup of heat in the closed room. Then, He placed his *ājñā cakra* (energy center between the eyebrows) on His father's *ājñā cakra*. He then uttered the *mahāvākya* (great declaration): *tat tvam asi, tat tvam asi, tat tvam asi, ahaṁ brahmāsmi, ahaṁ brahmāsmi, ahaṁ brahmāsmi* (Thou art That; I am the ultimate reality). Energy transfer must have surely taken place.

I cannot even begin to understand its meaning. Then, with absolute grace, He removed His turban and put it on His father's head. A *rudrākṣa* rosary was placed around his neck.

The moments that followed are frozen in time in our memories. Something in me gave way. I felt an ecstatic connectivity.

Shiva was no longer a mere concept for me. He danced before my eyes.

I realized that the updated version of Shiva is Nithyananda. It blew my mind. Something in me died forever, for something else to bloom.

Later, just before the doors were opened to let people in, one healer echoed the feeling in all our hearts when he said, '*Swamiji*, if this is how death is going to be, I am ready to die now!'

The next moments were all about history being created in Tiruvannamalai. For the first time women were allowed to accompany the funeral procession to the cremation area. The bier was lifted onto the flower-bedecked vehicle. With *Swamiji* leading the way, women sang the beautifully evocative devotional lyrics of

the *Arunachala Aksharamana Maalai* (the soul stirring hymn to Arunachala Shiva, composed by the enlightened master Bhagwan Sri Ramana Maharshi) accompanying it on its last earthly journey.

The most poignant and unbelieving scene was that of *Amma*, the wife of the departed soul, walking alongside the vehicle, rhythmically clapping her hands to the beat of the devotional song. I do not think this happens in any strata of society, let alone in a small temple town like Tiruvannamalai. What astonishing courage! What progressive thinking, done not as an act of defiance or with the need to score some socially relevant points, but simply as an expression of implicit trust, inner steel and dignified grace!

When we reached the cremation area, *Swamiji* informed us that this was the land gifted by *Amma's* father to start a Dhyanapeetam Center in Tiruvannamalai. He revealed to the gathering that the first person to attend the Nithyananda Spurana Program and get enlightened before leaving the body was His father. It was only befitting that the body of a realized soul should be cremated here. When the pyre was readied, the mortal remains of Sri Nithya Arunachalananda Swami were placed on it. The way the body was positioned was symbolic. At one end was the sacred Arunachala Hill. At the other end was *Swamiji*, the enlightened master! The formless and the form on either side.

Can anyone ask for greater protection than this?

As the final moments arrived for the curtain to be drawn on this drama, people were given flowers to offer at the feet of the departed soul one last time. Then, *Swamiji* informed the gathered crowd that as a *sanyāsi* who had cut all family ties, He couldn't perform the last rites of his father as a son would traditionally be expected to do. However as a guru, it was His responsibility to conduct the rites of passage for His disciple. *Swamiji* recalled that when He had asked His father what kind of help he needed, His father had answered simply: '*Swami irunda podum.*' (If You are there, that is enough.)' *Swamiji* told us, 'At that moment, He became my disciple! That complete, total trust is enough. Nothing else is needed!'

Swamiji also declared that in the future, Nov 12th of every year, the death anniversary of Sri Nithya Arunachalananda Swami, will be celebrated within the Nithyananda Order as *Mahaparinirvana day*, the day of enlightened souls, in memory of those who attain enlightenment and leave the body under *Swamiji's* grace. He promised that no matter where His disciples died, His presence would be there to perform the last rites. With such an amazing promise thundering in our beings, the last, lingering fear of death seemed to melt away...

This was a promise from none other than Shiva Himself.

As His father's energy had traveled directly from a conscious state to a superconscious one, without slipping into the unconscious coma state, and had remained in that exalted level for 21 minutes, he had become enlightened. Therefore, he could not be treated in the normal way. Also, since he had been conferred with *antima sanyās* (final renunciation and enlightenment) the body had to be cremated with honors conferred upon enlightened souls.

It was like a spiritual salute of honor to a departed war hero.

Just before the pyre was lit, *Swamiji* called His mother and brothers, and gave them each a sandalwood log to be placed on the mortal remains of the energy that had been a husband and father for many years. There was finality to that act. Then with cries of 'Sri Nithya Arunachalananda Swami Ki Jai' (Hail to Sri Nithya Arunachalananda Swami) rending the air, *Swamiji* performed *aarati*, lit the funeral pyre and consigned it to flames, all with flowing grace and compassion.

The last cameo shot that I remember is of *Swamiji* putting His arm around His mother and hugging her to His side, acknowledging her trusting innocence and spiritual strength and courage.

He stood tall with His biological family around Him - son, brother, master, God.

I offer the writing of this whole experience as an act of deep gratitude, and as an expression of my love and respect to each and everyone reading this. If anything, it was your deep longing to 'experience the experience' that made this sharing possible.

In Nithyananda

MNM

BhagavadGita

Secret of Secrets

CHAPTER 9

Logic can never lead you to Self-realization. Dissolution of logic will. Devotion and trust are the keys to this dissolution.



- ◆ *Swamiji*, you talked about the difference between questions and doubts and how Arjuna's questions change into doubts. Can you elaborate on this, please?
- ◆ How can we create trust in *Swamiji*? How can we drop doubts about doing what we want to do with our hearts when our heads keep asking questions?
- ◆ When you tell us to ignore the material world and focus on the energy behind matter, it is difficult. Whatever we see is matter; we do not have the sensitivity to see the energy. How to go beyond material manifestation?
- ◆ What does Krishna mean when He says, 'Follow Me, I am the supreme Godhead?'
- ◆ You said that we should move from the form to the formless in worship. However, some religions totally oppose this and consider form worship barbaric. Can you please explain this?
- ◆ Why are there so many rituals? Why do people do rituals in the first place? Are they in any way related to spirituality?
- ◆ I am unclear even after you explained, the purpose of rituals. We see so many things happening in a temple. So many *pūjās* and prayer rituals are done in a temple. Even in the home, people do *pūjā*. What is the need to do so many things? I can pray to Existence directly. Why are we doing so many things? What is the concept of *pūjā*?
- ◆ How can we differentiate our desires from what we have borrowed from others?



Secret Of Secrets

We are now at the halfway mark of the Bhagavad Gita. Arjuna started in total confusion and dilemma. His questions were varied and repetitive. It was as if he did not listen to what Krishna told him. As I said, questions arise from inner violence. They arise from the ego to prove one's correctness.

These questions gradually morph into doubts. Doubts are essential for any seeker. Doubt and faith are two sides of the same coin. Without doubt, we cannot develop faith. Blind faith will not help the seeker. It is just based upon social conditioning and will collapse under pressure. Real faith develops in the seeker when he sincerely questions spiritual truths. Raising sincere doubts before an enlightened master actually does a lot to integrate a person and strengthen his faith.

Krishna sees the change that is happening within Arjuna. He feels Arjuna's inner violence and conflict is clearing up and that his individual consciousness is opening. The master is ready to change gears now and take the dialogue to the next level that is needed to address this change in attitude.

In previous chapters Krishna explains to Arjuna how to act without attachment by renouncing the outcome of his actions to Existence. In the last chapter He provides Arjuna an understanding of the process of death and liberation. Now Krishna reveals to Arjuna the greatest of all secrets, the secret about Himself.

Q: Swamiji, you talked about the difference between questions and doubts and how Arjuna's questions change into doubts. Can you elaborate on this, please?

When we are young, we question. Children continuously ask, 'Why is the sky so high or why is that cloud like a bird?' A child *must* be full of questions. That is the way intelligence flowers. Adults do not have answers to these questions most of the time, or if they do, they give foolish answers.

A child's questions are beyond logic. At least, we can attempt a rational, scientific answer if a child asks, 'Why is the sky blue?' However, if the child asks, 'Why is the sky so high?', what can we answer with our limited, logical mind? Since we cannot answer, we become upset and tell the child to keep quiet.

If we look at the question with the curiosity of a child, we go beyond our limited mind. This is how great scientists discover great truths. This is how Newton formulated the gravitational law. This is why Archimedes ran out of his bath naked.

A child questions in innocence. A child questions in curiosity. Often, it does not seek an answer. It expresses wonderment about what nature is. It is a blissful expression.

As the child grows up physically, he becomes conditioned by the people around him. He is constantly being told what to do and why and how. The conditioned child becomes a greedy and fearful adult.

A child has not created an identity around itself yet. Our identities are defined by our desires and the result of our desires. What we possess, what is 'mine' and what is 'ours', determines the opinion we have about ourselves. We are therefore poor or rich, powerful or inconsequential, and we behave appropriately to maintain that status.

As we grow up, we borrow and absorb the desires of others out of greed. We acquire and become fearful of losing what we have acquired. Our lives are driven by greed and fear. This mindset determines the identity of what we think we are and what we think we should be. We develop our egos and live in constant fear of losing that ego or identity.

This fear creates inner violence when our ego is threatened. Anything that threatens our status, our possessions, our desires and therefore, whatever threatens our identity, provokes inner violence. At the very least, this inner violence expresses itself as questions.

This is the basic difference between the questioning attitude of a child and the questioning attitude of an adult. The child comes from the position of curiosity and happiness. The adult reacts from his ego and inner violence.

Sit back and reflect upon what happens when someone questions our knowledge. Our knowledge is not a tangible possession. We think so highly of it and we are so dependent on it. When there is a challenge to it, we immediately become violent.

All knowledge is borrowed. What knowledge arises from the senses, through sensory inputs, seeing and hearing and so on, is from someone else. It is from somewhere else. It is borrowed. It is not ours to claim. So why should we become agitated when this borrowed knowledge is questioned?

But we assume responsibility for that knowledge because it has become another possession of ours. It forms part of our identity that we carefully build and nurture.

It takes wisdom and awareness to realize that this knowledge is like a castle built of cards. It requires inner awareness to know that it can crumble like a pack of cards that are stacked one on top of another. This wisdom is never borrowed. This wisdom comes from within. This wisdom arises through inner contemplation and meditation.

Once inner awareness blossoms, inner violence shrinks. We realize that there is no solid basis upon which our identity is built up. Life is ever-changing. Life is unpredictable, impermanent and uncontrollable. There is no identity that can be rigidly retained throughout one's life. As this awareness blooms, our questions turn to doubts.

Doubts are a reflection of our uncertainty about our identities. They reflect greater understanding of the reality of life. They arise not from inner violence but from growing awareness.

Sometimes disciples tell me how upset they are to have self-doubts about the spiritual path they have embarked upon. I tell them that it is a reflection of their growing faith. Faith and doubt are two sides of the same coin. We cannot have one without the other. We need to peel the layer of doubt to reveal the next layer of faith that in turn exposes another doubt. This process goes on until we discover that there is nothing at the core.

We reach where we belong: eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.

At the core, it is not faith born out of intellectual understanding or a greater emotional acceptance. Such faith, as I said, carries doubts with it. When our understanding becomes internalized and when it becomes a deeply experienced truth within us, then something deeper and stronger develops in our relationship with the master. We develop trust.

When both questions and doubts disappear, we are in a state of surrender. This is not a surrender arising from weakness. This is not a surrender that happens because we do not know which way to turn and where to go. Such surrender is foolish. That is the kind of surrender one has towards some authority or to religious and political power because one feels powerless and does not know what else to do. That is a surrender based on fear.

Surrender to the master is a surrender born out of courage. It arises out of deep conviction of knowing what to do and where to go. It is surrender with awareness.



Eternal And Easy

9.1 Krishna said:

Arjuna, you trust Me and you are not envious of Me; I shall therefore impart to you this profound and secret wisdom and experience;

This will free you of all miseries of material existence.

9.2 This knowledge is king of all knowledge and the greatest secret of all secrets.

It is the purest knowledge, sacred and gives direct perception of Self-realization.

It is eternal and easy to practice.

9.3 Those who have no faith in this knowledge cannot attain Me, O conqueror of foes;

They will return to birth and death in this material world.

Krishna assures Arjuna with these verses. He says, 'My dear Arjuna, because you are never envious of Me, I shall impart to you this most confidential knowledge and realization, knowing which, you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.'

Beautiful lines! He says, 'Because you are never envious of Me.' Depending on the context, this verse can be taken to mean 'Because you are not envious of Me' or 'Because you have trust in Me.'

We may wonder how Arjuna could be envious of Krishna. Please be very clear, you don't know the ways in which the human mind works. We really don't know the ways in which human minds work, especially since in our generation, we always think of Arjuna as being human and Krishna as divine. We accept Krishna

as God. However, when Krishna was alive, when He was in the body, people did not always accept that He is divine. In addition, Arjuna and Krishna were friends. They were close friends, so Arjuna treated Krishna as a human and related to Him with human emotions.

Krishna says,

‘My dear Arjuna, because you are never envious of Me, I shall impart to you this most confidential knowledge and realization, knowing which, you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.’

We should first understand the atmosphere, the background. Only then will we intensely understand this whole chapter as it is expressed.

We may be surprised at Krishna’s statement. The very idea that Arjuna might be envious of Krishna may make us surprised.

To tell you honestly, whenever the masters were in the body, people never respected them. This problem always existed. Only after they left the body did people accept and worship them. Actually, it is easy to worship a photograph. There is no sacrifice or transformation required. However, it is never easy to worship a living being. The living person will always be questioned and envied.

There is a beautiful one-liner:

During his life, the grandfather is forced to live in the family outhouse. After his death, he is brought into the house and respected as a photograph!

As long as he is alive, he lives outside the house; he lives in the outhouse. Especially in India, every village home has a front porch. As long as he is alive, he lives there, or in the verandah in city houses. When he is dead, his photo is kept inside the prayer room. When he is alive, he has no place inside the house! However, once he dies, his photograph has a respected place inside the home.

It is the same way with the enlightened master. When a master is alive he is never understood. He is never respected and he is never received. When he has left the body, when he is no more in physical form, it is easy to worship him.

A beautiful incident:

A group of devotees from Chaitanya Mahaprabhu’s (an enlightened master from India) birthplace, Mayapur, came to Ramakrishna. They told him, ‘Oh master, we missed Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. We could not see him. If we had

that fortune, we would have become enlightened. We would have experienced devotion to Krishna.'

Ramakrishna laughed and said, 'When Chaitanya was alive, many people went to him and complained, 'Oh Chaitanya! We missed Krishna. We could not see Krishna. If we had seen Krishna, we could have enjoyed the devotion, the energy!'

Ramakrishna says, 'Open your eyes and see. Chaitanya is here. Just as people went to Chaitanya and talked about Krishna, you come here to talk about Chaitanya. You come here and complain that you have missed Chaitanya.'

Whenever masters are alive, it is difficult for people to accept their divinity. However, once they leave the body, people say, 'We missed Ramakrishna,' 'We missed Ramana Maharshi,' 'We missed Chaitanya,' or 'We missed Mirabai.' We complain about what we missed. We never realize what we have.

Here Krishna says, 'Because you are never envious of Me, I will give you the ultimate secret.'

Here, please understand, Krishna is giving the ultimate secret. Once we know this secret, then there is no difference between the Divine and us. Here He gives us the straight, ultimate secret.

In the business world, the leader usually never gives secrets to anyone, whatever they may do, however close they may be. Corporate people maintain secrets. Here Krishna says, 'I am not going to maintain any secrets. I am going to open the whole thing.' He says that knowledge is free. It is up to us to use it.

Now, modern day IT companies declare that knowledge is free. Yet five thousand years ago, Krishna declared that knowledge is free. He says, 'I am opening all the secrets.' He decides, 'I am giving you this secret because you are never envious of Me.'

There is an important thing that people who go near the master should know, especially people who live around the master. By and by, these disciples, instead of trying to achieve the state of the master, they try to achieve the status of the master. State is different from status. The enlightened state of the master should be achieved, not the status that his enlightenment confers. When we work for status, we are in trouble.

Once I went to a college for a public lecture. It was a meditation program in Tamilnadu. You know how the college kids behave. One young boy questioned me, 'Why should you be respected so much? After all, you are my age.' Of course, it is

true. I am barely a few years older than him. He asked, 'Why do they shower so many roses at your feet when you come?' In India, spiritual masters are usually received with flowers wherever they go.

I had tried my best to advise the organizer of the program, 'Don't do these things. Don't offer flowers, especially since it is a college. Naturally I will face such questions.' Yet the organizer, a devotee, wanted to somehow show his devotion. He took care of the arrangements and ensured there were flowers. In the question and answer session, the boy directly asked, 'Why should so many flowers be showered at your feet? Why should you be respected so much?' Of course, naturally, it is jealousy, nothing else.

The first thing I told him was this: 'I tried my best to avoid these arrangements. However, they have done it out of devotion. Next thing, from another angle, you only see the flowers that are showered now. You don't know how many thorns these feet have crossed. You don't know how many austerities this body has endured. You don't know how many thorns these feet had to cross to come to these flowers. So don't be envious for the status. Be envious of the state. Try to achieve the same state in which I live. Then, not only will you be showered with flowers, you will be showered with everything. Achieve the state, not the status.'

When you see the status, you will always be caught in jealousy. If you see the state, I will become a source of inspiration for you. If you see the state in which I live, I will be an inspirational source for you to achieve the same state. I will be a role model. You will think, 'When he can achieve this, why not me?' I become an inspirational source for you!

I tell people that the only difference, the one and only difference between an ordinary person and an enlightened being is that an ordinary man is sleeping while an enlightened person is awakened; that's all. The consciousness is the same.

Again and again I repeat, 'Whether you believe it or not, accept it or not, realize it or not, you *are* God. You are divine. You have two choices. You can either sleep as long as you want without experiencing this truth, or you can make the conscious choice to experience your enlightenment. But the truth is, 'You are That.'

Here, Krishna says, 'Because you never try to achieve my status, I am trying to give you my state.' The person who never tries to achieve the status of the master achieves the state of the master. First, state comes. Then, status follows. If we try to create the status, the state will never be achieved.

Ramakrishna says, 'First God, then the world.' The world is like a shadow. Status is like a shadow. If we run after it, we can never grab it no matter how much we chase it. However, if we walk on the path, it simply follows.

The outer world is like a shadow. If we run after it, try to catch it, we will never be able to grab and hold onto it. Try your best to run after the shadow. Can you catch it? No. However, if we walk on our path, it follows us.

Go towards the state, status will follow you. If we run after the status, we will never grab it. Here Krishna says, 'Because you are never jealous, never envious of My status and Me, I give you the ultimate secret of this state.'

And I tell you, this *is* the ultimate secret. Really, this is the ultimate secret. And He says, 'Knowing which, you shall be relieved of the miseries of material existence.'

What are the miseries of material existence? Whether we have something or not, it is misery. If we don't have, then the misery is, 'I don't have.' If we have, then we have the misery, 'I must protect it.'

Yoga means achieving. *Kṣema* means protecting. Yoga means achieving; *kṣema* means preserving. Both are miseries. Whether we have or not, it is misery.

Krishna says that the miseries of having wealth and not having wealth, both miseries that are caused by material existence disappear by knowing this secret. And I tell you honestly this is the ultimate secret that needs to be understood. Knowledge of this secret liberates you.

He says, 'This knowledge is the king of all knowledge. The greatest secret of all secrets, it is the purest knowledge and because it gives direct perception of the Self by realization, it is the perfection of religion. It is everlasting and it is joyfully performed.'

See, religion or a spiritual path should have three characteristics. First, it should clearly describe the goal of life. Next, it should clearly give you the path to achieve the goal. Third, it should make you happy to travel in that path. The path itself should be joyful.

A small story:

Some herbal doctors advertised with billboards claiming they can cure anything. One doctor's billboard said he could cure all diseases that we know the names of, as well as all diseases that we don't know the names of. He put up a billboard with all these claims. One person came with a disease.

The doctor asked, 'What is your disease?'

This person said, 'I don't know the name. Please diagnose it yourself.'

The doctor tried his best to diagnose. However, he was unable to determine the disease. But he had put up the big advertisement, so he had to cure. There was no other way. So he gave some medicine. The medicine was: 'Swallow a crowbar without it touching your teeth and drink three liters of water. You will be cured!'

What kind of medicine is this? The medicine clearly shows that the person will not be cured!

In the same way, our solution or path should not be impractical. The path that we are shown should not be impractical. If it is impractical, naturally, we cannot practice.

There was once a *yogi* in the Himalayas. When disciples came to him, he gave a technique: 'Hold your nose for two hours and sit.' Can anybody sit like that? He said, 'If you do that, you will become enlightened.' Who can travel that path? Nobody can travel it. The path must not be complicated. It must be simple.

So here, Krishna says, 'It is eternal,' meaning that the result that we achieve is everlasting. He uses all the advertising terms! And it is joyfully performed. It is easy. We don't need to struggle for it. We don't need to suffer. It is the deepest secret. All we need to do is to realize the secret. Understand the secret.

Why is it a secret? If it is going to help so much then why is it a secret? If it is going to be such an important thing, why should it be kept a secret? Why not let the whole world use it? It is important for us to understand this point.

Please be very clear that the ultimate secret, the ultimate knowledge is not for the masses. Masses always get stuck with small things and shallow entertainment. That is why, if we run a cinema theatre, you can see how such a big crowd gathers! Or if we run a public show, how many people attend it. The crowd will be ten times more!

Only a few hundred people are here today because we built only a temple. Temples are for the chosen few, not for all. We need intelligence to come to a temple. We need intelligence to enter spirituality. It is not for everyone.

Yesterday I received a question. One lady asked, '*Swamiji*, my husband does not accept or understand the path I am traveling, the path of yoga. Coming to this

program is important to me and I want to attend it. However, it is difficult for my husband to come to terms with it. Do you have a suggestion to help bridge this gap?’

How to make the husband or wife spiritual? How to convert them to spirituality? When people ask me this question, I laugh and ask them, ‘If I knew this secret, do you think I would have become a *sanyāsi* and renounced the material world!’

Honestly, the answer is that it cannot be done. It only has to happen. It has to happen on its own from within the person.

I can say one thing: All you can do is give him some intelligence about life. You cannot directly give spirituality. Please don’t ask him to meditate. Don’t ask him to come to the temple. Talk to him again and again about life. Ask him, ‘What kind of a life are we leading? What are we doing? Why don’t we think about life? Again and again, we are caught in the same rut.’ All we can do is to give intelligence about life in this fashion. That’s all. Nothing else can be done.

Only by intelligence can a man come to spirituality. That is why this is preserved as a secret. If this spiritual intelligence is given to all, without bothering about the qualifications of the receiver, the person who receives will harm himself and others also.

First, he harms himself if he has not completely understood it. For example, what will a criminal do if he is told, ‘You are God?’ He will think, ‘I am God. So let me do whatever I want. I don’t have to bother.’ He misuses the knowledge. He does not use it. He abuses it. That is why I say he harms himself.

A person who experiences God radiates compassion. He radiates simplicity. He radiates innocence. Divine qualities express through him. He never hurts anybody. We see a beautiful innocent shine in him and such simplicity. He never hurts anybody. He never harms anybody.

If we are relaxed, blissful, in a good mood, and our employee or co-worker makes a mistake, do we shout at him? No. We will say, ‘Alright, leave it. What can be done?’ However, if we are in a bad mood, an irritable mood, nobody needs to make any mistake. We shout at everyone for no reason. We are waiting to rant and rave. We are waiting to shout.

Our mood decides our action. If we are blissful, we never do anything wrong. If we are in a hellish mood, we always make mistakes.

Please don't think people go to hell after making mistakes. No! We make mistakes because we are in hell. We do the right action because we are blissful. Someone who experiences that he is God never makes a mistake and never harms anybody.

If this knowledge is given to all, including those who don't have the maturity, naturally they harm themselves and they harm others. They hurt others. They say, 'I am God. Come here. I will do whatever I want.' That is why this knowledge is kept as a secret.

It is like terrorists having the secret of the atom bomb. Of course, it is dangerous for them and the world. In the same way, this is the secret of the spiritual world, the inner world. If the person who is not qualified knows this secret, it is dangerous for him.

That is why He says, 'this king of secrets is the king of knowledge.' Krishna reveals the secret only to qualified people.

Look at the story of Christ. He declared, 'I am the Son of God.' It is true, what Jesus declared is from His experience. He experienced enlightenment. He experienced the kingdom of God. He experienced heaven. That is why He clearly expresses, 'I am the Son of God. I am the Son of the Divine.' But there was only one thing there: He spoke about the inner kingdom. However, the people thought that He was trying to snatch the outer kingdom from the rulers.

Jesus spoke about a totally different truth; people understood it in a totally different way. Just a communication gap and so he had to die at such a young age. He had to be killed, crucified. The whole thing is nothing but a simple misunderstanding!

When Jesus says, 'I am the Son of God. I am the owner of the divine kingdom,' He means the inner space, the inner secrets. He expresses His experience. However, He expressed it to people who were envious of Him. The people who killed Him were envious of His inner liberation and were afraid of Him.

In this chapter Krishna says, 'I am not even God; I am something more than God. Whatever you think of as God rests in Me. All created beings rest in Me.' He declares, 'I am God.'

But He is not crucified because He declares this truth to a person who understands, to a person who accepts it and not to a person who is unable to

realize it. We need to see whether a person is mature enough or not to receive the truth before we share it.

Here, Krishna says it is a secret, because it can be delivered only to a person qualified to receive it.

You see, in the first two to three chapters, He speaks about *śāstra*, intellectual knowledge that can be given to anybody. However, these chapters are intimate secrets, delivered only from a master to a disciple, only to a disciple who is qualified, who is really interested to receive the knowledge and who really wants the knowledge.

One person asked me, 'Swamiji, please teach me about God. Give me enlightenment.' I told him, 'See, it is time for *prasād* (food offered to God and eaten by devotees with His blessings). Please go and eat in the ashram. They will give you *prasād*.'

If we go to any Indian ashram or temple, food that has been offered to the deity or Existence is then shared by all. That is the tradition. Hindus believe '*atithi devo bhava*,' meaning 'the guest is God'. We give them food. Whatever we eat, we share with them.

Anyway, I told this person, 'Please eat and come back. I will talk to you in the evening session.' He immediately said, 'No *Swamiji*! I must leave by the next bus. I have half an hour left. In this half an hour please tell me about God.'

In half an hour what can I tell him? What can a person understand in half an hour? Naturally, God cannot be given out like instant coffee! Coffee can be instant; Coca-cola can be given, but not God! We cannot have God instantly. We need to realize; we need a little patience.

The more we hurry, the more we will delay. Please understand that speed is not the technique of the inner world. In the inner world, the more we hurry, the more we delay. The hurrying, the tension, the stress, postpones the process, postpones the experience. It will not let us relax.

That is why Krishna says that these secrets can be told only to a person who is really interested, who is really intimate, and who really desires to know.

Beautiful words! All our scriptures are called *Upaniṣad*. Even Gita is called *Upaniṣad*. '*Gītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre śri Kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde*' is the verse at the end of every chapter. 'This is Upanishad of Bhagavad Gita, scripture of Yoga dealing with the science of the Absolute.'

The word *Upaniṣad* literally means ‘sitting down near someone’. It refers to the teaching style of a traditional *vedic* school or *gurukul* of ancient India where students sat by their master to learn. This is how knowledge was imparted. Knowledge was transmitted in close groups in a trusted environment. It was knowledge not merely through intellect as verbal communication. It was a communion of beings wherein the experience of one was experienced by the other.

See, in our home we keep everything prepared for our outwardly life. Whatever we need is there: a bed for sleeping, the kitchen for cooking, a dining table for sitting and eating. We collect all the materials one by one, and then we also collect luxurious things like jewelry. Our jewelry changes according to the color of our *sari* (traditional clothes of Indian women). Sometimes, the shoes also change! We have everything to match each other. Whatever we need for the outwardly life and comforts, we collect and store.

However, we forget an important fact. In the same way that we collect things for outward existence, for the outer space, we need to collect knowledge for our inner space: life solutions, solutions for our inner space. If we feel depressed or low, if we face some adverse situation, how are we to react? How are we to handle it? We need this knowledge to handle it, in our inner space.

Like collecting things for the outwardly life, we need to collect life solutions for a happy, blissful life. Collecting life solutions is what Krishna calls *jñāna yajñya*. What is *nitya* (eternal) and what is *anitya* (temporary)? What is *satya* (truth) and what is *asatya* (falsehood)? Acquiring all this understanding is *jñāna yajñya*.

If I literally translate this word *jñāna*, it refers to higher knowledge or wisdom and *yajñya* refers to the purification process that leads to this higher knowledge. What Krishna means through *jñāna yajñya* is the spiritual path that leads one to Self-realization. It is the path that creates awareness in us about our divinity. This realization of the deepest truths about oneself happens in many cases through a combination of two things: understanding about similar spiritual experiences by observing others and our own efforts to contemplate upon these experiences so that they are reproduced within.

Let me tell you one important thing. Please focus on the life solutions offered by great masters while gathering knowledge. I request that people read books that give life solutions as experienced by enlightened beings at least for half an hour every day: books of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, books of great masters. Numerous books provide deep insights into how we should lead life. We have the book ‘Guaranteed Solutions’ based on my teachings in the Life Bliss Programs. Many

spiritual books give life solutions. Spend at least half an hour every day reading books based on the life and teachings of enlightened masters.

If we can't spend half an hour reading, then listen to audio CDs in the car. In this country (USA), we spend at least one hour a day driving, on an average. The average is one hour. Whatever profession we are in or even if we don't have a profession, we drive just for the joy, for some reason. Even to shop for basic groceries, we drive at least one hour. Don't waste that hour. Always have some audio CDs that give life solutions in the car.

It is not that it must be my lectures. Read, watch or listen to anything that adds value and gives insight into leading a better life. It can be something you like that comes from an enlightened source and gives solutions for your life. Let that hour become your *jñāna yajñya*, your spiritual journey. Add more and more life solutions into your inner space.

I tell you one thing: A life solution may suddenly come up at the time of need and can reduce the depth of depression you experience. The moment a life solution erupts from our inner consciousness, from our inner space, the depth of depression can be immediately reduced. The low curve is straightened out and we move up in spirit. That is why I am telling you to make driving your *jñāna yajñya*. Let that time be used for collecting life solutions. Let it be a truly productive time in your life instead of it filling your inner space with all nonsense from the radio and what not. Whether you understand everything or not, listen. Let that become your habit. Automatically, life solutions, those words, stay in your inner space. You will be surprised how they will come to your aid when you need them!

If we don't do that, when we drive we will think about our worries. If we don't spend time finding life solutions, we spend time finding problems. We create problems. Even if we don't have problems, we will create problems!

If we have problems, we bother about them. If we don't have a problem and everything goes smoothly, what do we think? We think, 'Today everything is going well. I don't know what will happen tomorrow! *Swamiji*, if things go well one day, the next day I always get some problem.' We strongly believe that if we have no problems today, we will have problems tomorrow. It becomes a strong faith in us.

Whether we have problems or not, we worry. Better not to allow the mind to worry. Listen to something that gives life solutions. Let that hour become *jñāna yajñya* in our lives.

Krishna says that doing *jñāna yajñya* is one step. Understanding that the whole cosmos is energy is one step. If we understand that whatever exists is energy, automatically, fear will be taken away from our being.

The next question is, 'How can we say that whatever exists is energy, *Swamiji*? How can we say whatever exists is God? That is impossible. All these things are good to listen to, but are not practical to practice!'

Our mind never accepts that these things can be practiced and experienced. So Krishna continues; He goes on and comes out with the basic secrets.

Here Krishna gives the qualification of people who can attain Him. He clearly describes the people who can reach Him. When I say 'Him', it is not the form named Krishna that I speak about. When I say Nithyananda, I do not mean this six-foot Nithyananda. I mean the universal energy, the cosmic energy called *nityānanda* – eternal bliss.

In the first two verses He says, 'It is a great truth that I am going to tell and it is a secret that I am revealing to you.' Now He lets Arjuna know what kind of people can know the secret.

He says people who do not have faith in *dharma* or His teachings go back to the path of rebirth without enlightenment, without attaining Him. He says the qualification required is to have faith in His teachings. Only those people can come out of the vicious cycle of birth and death.

You see, having faith is one of the most important things, especially in the spiritual path. Whenever an enlightened master speaks, every word he utters is the truth. That is why I always add the words, 'Whether you believe it or not, accept it or not, understand it or not', whenever I talk about some controversial truth.

Actually, there is nothing called a 'controversial truth'. Truth is truth. A fact can be controversial. When I say controversial truth, I mean a truth that the normal human mind cannot accept with the limited knowledge it has. People who said that the earth was round were put to death because the human mind could not accept it at that time. It was a controversial truth, yet it is the truth.

When I say we are part of the same consciousness, when I say that we are all one, your mind cannot accept it because it tries to find a logical solution, an intellectual answer to everything. So you must have faith in me to understand what I speak.

One more thing is that there are three possible levels in which you can put faith in what a master says. With the first level or group, you can have doubt. That is obvious. You doubt what I say, what a master says, because you can't comprehend what I say.

See, you can have doubts. In fact, you should have doubts, only then you question what I say. However, you should find out if those doubts are genuine. If they arise out of ego, then it is your mind playing a game. Your mind creates a wall between you and me. As long as your doubts are genuine, as long as you question to know the truth out of curiosity, it is fine.

In my discourses, I encourage people to ask questions and to raise doubts. Only then can you fully internalize.

The second group or level is when you believe whatever I say. That is the second category. This is dangerous. Believing whatever I say without understanding and experiencing it for yourself is dangerous. This creates a weak foundation. When I say that you are God, if you just straightaway believe me it is dangerous, because you have not experienced it. If someone questions you on your belief, you will be unable to stand by it. You will stammer and stumble and do yourself harm.

I know lots of people who come to me, call themselves my devotees. When I ask whether they meditate, they stammer, ‘No *Swamiji*. There is so much work. There is no time.’ Then they say, ‘But I pray to you everyday, *Swamiji*. I offer fresh flowers and incense sticks.’ They talk as if they do me a big favor.

They are believers. Their foundation is weak. Only when they meditate will they experience what I speak about. Otherwise, they are just believers.

The third approach is trust. When you trust me, you accept what I say. You still have doubts. However, you are willing to break that wall and try to see and experience what I am saying. You build your foundation and you make it strong because you trust me. This is the way faith should develop. This is the way it should be. Faith should arise from a strong foundation. First you trust me, then you try exploring the truths I share and when you have a glimpse of the truth, you believe me with a stronger foundation. Now nobody can shake you because you have developed a strong base. You have done the work yourself.

Here, Krishna talks about faith in *dharma*, His teaching. We should understand this word very deeply. Only then we can understand Krishna’s teaching. Buddha also says:

buddhaṁ śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi
dhammaṁ śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi
saṅgaṁ śaraṇaṁ gacchāmi

Buddha talks about surrendering to Him - *Buddham*, to His teaching - *dhammam* and to His group - *sangam*. Buddha says surrender to My teaching. He means have faith in My teachings. Trust them, try them and have faith in them.

You see, we are different from animals because we can have faith in *dharma* - meaning the higher levels of consciousness. Without *dharma*, we are the same as any animal. When an animal feels like eating, it eats. When it feels like sleeping, it sleeps. It is completely controlled by instincts. It does not make a decision consciously, based on right or wrong. However, a human being has one extra power. He has free will to follow *dharma*. He has free will to do or not do, to accept or not accept.

When Krishna says *dharma*, He means anything that leads us to a higher level of consciousness. Man without consciousness is an animal, a *dānava*. In Hindu epics there are two types of people - *mānava* and *dānava*, humans and non-humans. The first category has faith in *dharma* and a higher level of consciousness. *Dānava* are nothing but animals. They do not have faith in any *dharma*, so their level of consciousness is low.

The only difference between man and an animal is the seed of consciousness implanted in us. We must water this seed and allow it to germinate. We must nurture this sapling to flower into a fully-grown tree. We need faith in *dharma* for this tree of consciousness to happen in us.

Krishna clearly says that if we do not have faith in *dharma*, we go back to the cycle of birth and death. He gives it straight. He says we must allow consciousness to flower in us, and in order to do that we must have faith in *dharma*.

When our faith is complete, when we have internalized His *dharma* in everything that we do, our consciousness automatically blossoms. When we reach that state of consciousness, we merge with universal consciousness and then we are free from the cycle of birth and death.

So Krishna gives a technique. He says, 'Have faith in *dharma* and it will lead you to the Ultimate.'

Q: How can we create trust in Swamiji? How can we drop doubts about doing what we want to do with our hearts when our heads keep asking questions?

This is a wonderful question and very honest. Your problem is shared by many people.

First of all, you cannot create trust. Trust has to happen. Trust is not the same as faith. It is a higher level of understanding. Faith and belief are our conditioning. It is the stuff we are fed from childhood. Children are suggestible. We know now that until adolescence the brain wave patterns of children are in the alpha state and they can be easily influenced by the opinion and guidance of older people. We are taught from a young age whom we should believe and whom we should distrust.

The trust we are talking about is different from conditioned faith and trust. The ordinary faith and trust come from our head, logic and so-called knowledge inputs. Yet, deep within us, from our being, there is a constant nagging of dissatisfaction with our conditioning. Many ignore this nagging and occupy themselves with the outer world.

However, some find it impossible to ignore this inner call. They listen and move in a direction that is in tune with this voice. They turn to religion, to scriptures and finally they turn to masters when they find themselves deeply dissatisfied with whatever they have experienced in the outer world.

The doubts that we have of the outer world carry over into our search of the inner world too. For every answer we receive, we have a dozen new questions. That is natural and as it should be. Then there comes a point where logic is exhausted. It may happen through a sudden revelation, by reading something, witnessing something, listening to someone, or for no reason at all. It is as if all questions have been answered and all doubts have been cleared. I term this experience a 'click'. This click initiates a churning inside us. It starts a psychological revolution in our system.

This is when trust begins, true trust, trust that leads us to surrendering our logic to a higher state of intelligence.

Many followers remember the exact point when this happened to them. They invariably share it as moments when they were listening to these discourses, or read the books. A sudden chemical reaction within them says, 'Wake up! Your time is up; no more questions.' The brain issues a command that overrides logic.

We cannot force this. This happens by itself when we are ready.

People ask, 'How do we remember you once we leave your presence?' I say, 'If I am your master and you accept me as your master, the problem will be trying to forget me not remembering me! Your master will occupy your entire inner space - head, heart and being.'

Let your head and logic exhaust themselves with questions. They will eventually get tired, because logic has an end and spirituality is endless.



Rest In Me

9.4 The entire universe is pervaded by Me in My formless form.

All beings are based in Me, but I am not in them.

9.5 Look at My mystic powers!

I create and sustain all living entities but do not depend on them, nor do they depend on Me.

9.6 As the mighty wind, blowing everywhere, always rests in eternal space,

All beings rest in Me.

9.7 O son of Kunti, at the end of every age all beings merge into Me,

At the beginning of every new Age I create them again.

9.8 My material nature creates the beings again and again.

They are controlled by My material nature.

It is time to reveal the secrets.

Krishna starts:

*mayā tatam idam sarvaṁ jagadvyaktamūrtinā
matsthāni sarva bhūtāni na cāhaṁ teṣvavasthitāḥ*

‘By Me, in my formless form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me but I am not in them.’

This should be understood. Before entering further into this verse, the meaning of the verse should be understood.

I want to tell you about my meeting with Charles Townes, a Nobel Laureate. He is a great scientist. He discovered something related to LASER and MASER. He discovered some secrets and some truths.

I asked him, 'How did you discover? How did this truth happen in your being?'

He answered in a beautiful way, '*Swamiji*, to tell you honestly, I was relaxing in a park in Washington. It was early morning about six a.m. I was supposed to give a lecture on this subject to a group that day at nine a.m. I tried my best to recollect everything. I was completely frustrated because I could not achieve much. Suddenly like a revelation, as an intuition, the conclusion was revealed to me! The whole truth came into my consciousness. I discovered it! I immediately penned down what I got.'

And he says, 'I then realized I had a difficulty: I knew the conclusion. I knew the truth, however, not the steps! I didn't know the logical steps to arrive at that conclusion! I would not be able to present it unless I knew the steps. So after that, I needed to think and develop the logical steps. Only then could I present it to others. Like an intuition, suddenly, it happened. It had been revealed to me.'

Not only Charles Townes, even Albert Einstein said, 'The theory of relativity was revealed in deep meditation. It was like sitting on the edge of a light particle and traveling in space. It came as an intuition.'

Actually, even this experience is not a big thing. The truth, the important thing is this: I asked Charles Townes, 'How did you feel when it happened to you, when the revelation happened to you?' Because what he experienced was intuition just as our sages experienced.

Ṛṣi, a sage, is someone who experienced the truth as a *mantra*, a sacred and mystic syllable of knowledge and who has **seen** the *mantra* - *mantra trāyate iti ṛṣihi*. The person who sees the *mantra*, who visualizes and experiences the *mantra*, is a *ṛṣi*. The ultimate Truth is suddenly revealed in the *ṛṣi's* consciousness. They experience an inner vision; they then express the experience in words as a *mantra*.

In the same way, this scientist is also a *ṛṣi*. Charles Townes is a *ṛṣi*. He had a revelation about the secrets of the outer world. His intuition revealed the truth to him. I asked him, 'How did you feel when that intuition happened to you? What was your feeling?'

He said, '*Swamiji*, I don't know how to exactly express those things; however one thing is certain: from that moment onwards, I know for sure that the whole universe is intelligence!'

This is the truth! The whole universe is pure intelligence. The whole universe is not dead matter. It is not an accident. The universe is not an accident. It is pure intelligence. It can respond to our thoughts. Please understand, the whole universe, planet earth, air, oceans, rivers, earth, fire, or the space, sun, moon, this whole universe, is intelligence. It can reciprocate. It can respond. It can react to our thoughts.

This is an important and basic understanding. The moment we understand that we are this energy that is intelligence, the moment we are aware that we are inside the energy that is intelligence, at that moment, we immediately settle into a deep relaxation.

The moment we experience, we understand: we are under the guidance of an intelligent energy. We are taken care of by an intelligent energy, we are part of the cosmic intelligence and we don't need to struggle. We don't need to stress ourselves. We don't need to create tension. We don't need to torture ourselves with insecurity problems and with unnecessary worries.

Actually, all our problems, tensions and stresses arise because we think *we* do everything. We think *we* are responsible for everything that happens around us. We think the universe runs because of us. Understand that the universe runs in spite of us! We should understand that the universe is intelligent and it responds to our thoughts. If we trust the universe, we experience how light we are. We can unload all our troubles including the extra responsibility of thinking that *we* do everything.

This does not mean that we just sit and relax and say, 'Okay, the universe is intelligence. It will take care of everything.' This is laziness and escapism. We still must do what we need to do. We should still work; however we can enjoy the process. You see, we think of the result all the time. Our thoughts arise out of fear or greed: fear of whether we will get the results or greed of wanting more and more.

However, we never enjoy the process of doing that work. When we enjoy the process and trust the universal intelligence, thoughts arising out of fear and greed will disappear. We will enjoy the process of doing and we will let the universe take care of the results. Krishna says elsewhere, 'You do what you have to. Do it, but surrender the results to Me.' When He says 'Me', He refers to the universal consciousness or intelligence.

This is what Krishna means in the next verse when He says that the beings do not depend on Him, nor does He depend on them. Of course, it is clear that the

universe does not depend upon us; yet how can He say that we, the beings created and sustained by the universe, do not depend upon it? What He means is this: it is not a passive and lazy dependence of letting everything happen while we sit idle. It is an active understanding. One does what one must do as part of his life process but without attachment and ownership.

One way or the other, we are in this universe. Because the universe is intelligence, it responds to our thoughts. It makes things happen. Since we are part of this universe, just flow with the energy of the universe. Do not resist it. If this understanding penetrates our life, it is enough!

If we know the universe is intelligence, we never question how life unfolds. We don't say, 'I am moral. But I see people who don't live morally living luxuriously, happily. Yet I always suffer!' We never have these questions or frustrations because we know the cosmic intelligence will take care ultimately. Whoever is immoral or whoever goes around and disturbs others will naturally face the consequences, because intelligence takes care. In the same way, if we are honest, integrated, and living a spiritual life, we will live a beautiful life. We are rewarded because the whole universe is run by an intelligence that responds to this.

Don't think the cosmos is just matter. If we think the cosmos is matter, we are materialistic. If we understand that the cosmos is intelligence, we are spiritual, that's all.

The only difference between the materialistic and spiritual person is that the materialist thinks the whole thing is material: 'Let me acquire more and more land. Let me acquire more and more material things.' He thinks the whole thing is material.

The spiritual person understands that the whole thing is spirit, energy. If we understand that the whole thing is spirit, energy, intelligence, then a tremendous relaxation and bliss consciousness happens to us.

Please understand that bliss is not just a mood. It is our very consciousness. If it comes and goes as a mood, we are only having one or two experiences. One devotee asked, 'Bliss comes and goes, what to do?'

I explained, 'You are having initial glimpses of bliss. Through your mind, you are trying to touch the bliss. Nothing needs to be done; just relax, that's all.'

However, once we understand this secret, a deep relaxation happens to us. In such a deep relaxation, we straightaway experience bliss consciousness. Once we

experience bliss consciousness, it is everlasting. The bliss mood comes and stays. Bliss consciousness is everlasting.

Krishna says, 'By My formless form, this entire universe is pervaded. All beings are in Me.' He speaks of cosmic intelligence.

Be very clear, such a big universe is moving and happening. All the planets move around the sun. Each planet has its own moons. Now the latest discovery is a planet called Sedna in our solar system, further away from Pluto. They have also discovered a neighboring solar system called Cygnus that has three suns. Not one sun, but three suns, around one planet, in this universe.

So now we cannot say *nava graha*, (nine major heavenly bodies as defined in Hindu mythology) we must say *dasa graha* (ten major heavenly bodies)!

There are so many suns, so many moons and so many planets. However, each one travels in its route properly. Each one goes properly in its route. No traffic police! Accidents are rare. Unless intelligence runs the whole thing, do you think things can happen so beautifully?

And even on this planet Earth, see how the whole thing is beautiful! The whole thing happens in a clear way. Everything is in order. Only wherever human beings live, there is chaos! Except human beings, nobody creates chaos. Even in chaos, the Divine creates order. Humans bring in the chaos.

We need to understand that the whole universe is intelligence and it operates out of intelligence. This intelligence responds to our thoughts and we can relate with this intelligence. When we imbibe this, then we naturally experience a deep peace. Rest, a real, ultimate rest and confidence to live, happens within us.

As long as we think the world is matter or material, there is no use living. Nothing matters. Even if we become the president of one country, other countries will not be under our control. We can never become the president of the whole world. So naturally, we can never achieve the whole matter.

As long as we believe the world is material, we create more and more violence because we live materially. Materially means that we must snatch from others. One way or another; violence will exist. Only a person who experiences, who understands that the whole thing is energy, intelligence, only he can relax.

Let me repeat the next verse.

*yathākāśasthito nityaṁ vāyus sarvatrago mahān
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni matsthānītyupadhāraya*

He says, 'Understand that as the mighty wind blowing everywhere rests in the sky, all created beings rest in Me.' Please understand this concept:

He says, 'Just as the wind rests in the sky energy.' Please understand how the earth is energy. We know earth is energy. Take a stone. If a stone is thrown at us or if we throw a stone, we know the energy behind that stone. Next, consider water. We know the energy of water. Whoever knows about the waters that devastated New Orleans knows the energy of water! Or, if it floods, we know what water does; water is energy, we can understand that. Next is *agni*, fire. All of us know the power of fire. Next, air: storms, hurricanes, tornados. We know the power of air.

In the same way, *ākāśa* (space or ether) is also energy. We do not know the power of *ākāśa* because it does not directly create impacts and effects in our lives. *Ākāśa* is disturbed by our collective negative thoughts. The collective energy of the universe is *ākāśa*. *Ākāśa* is also related to collective negativity, collective poison.

When the earth element is disturbed or poisoned, only one person suffers. For example, if our food is poisoned, we alone suffer, that's all. If water is poisoned, the whole region suffers. Whoever uses the water supply, suffer. If whatever creates fire in us is corrupted, a big group suffers. We can use medicines as an example for fire because medicines keep the fire inside us alive. To keep us healthy, physically fit, we need medicines. If medicines are corrupted, people who take the medicines suffer. If chemicals pollute the air, the whole country suffers. If air is corrupted, if the air is polluted, the whole society suffers. But if space, *ākāśa*, is polluted, the whole world suffers.

Corruption at higher levels of energy creates suffering for more and more people. More and more people suffer when higher levels of energy become polluted. The higher the level of energy that is corrupted, the number of people suffering is more. Our thoughts corrupt space. Space is energy.

Because ether or space is so subtle, and so sensitive, we cannot feel the happenings in the space of ether. We feel the happenings in the other four spaces: earth, water, fire and air, so because of that we can understand the happenings in them. However, we fail to understand that space, ether, is also energy, a power. It is more subtle and more powerful because the subtler it becomes, the more powerful and energetic it becomes.

One more thing to know is that there are three levels of space. The first level is when we are limited to what is inside this skin. This is *ghaṭākāśa*, what is

contained within our body. We limit our whole understanding of everything around us to this body. We think this is the only thing that is the ultimate. We become conscious of how this body should look, how it should be maintained. We think we are only this body and nothing else. This is the lowest level.

The next level is *cidākāśa*. This space refers to what our mind perceives as the world. Let's say we are sitting here but our mind is in Los Angeles. Then that becomes our *cidākāśa*, the space perceived by our mind. The next moment our mind shifts to Bangalore. Then that becomes our *cidākāśa*. The space that our mind operates in is *cidākāśa*.

The third and final level is *mahākāśa*. The whole cosmos, the universe, everything that is outside and that is inside forms *mahākāśa*. This is the ultimate level. This is the level where everything that we see as different becomes one.

Please clearly understand these three spaces. Our body, everything that is inside this skin is *ghaṭākāśa*. Next, the space governed by our mind, by our thoughts, is *cidākāśa*. Finally, the whole universe, the whole cosmos, forms *mahākāśa*.

Now, if something happens inside our body, we immediately feel it. If we are hurt, we clearly see it. We see blood flow. We see a rash. We see a cut. We clearly see and feel any disturbance or event in *ghaṭākāśa*. This event in *ghaṭākāśa* happens at a gross level.

When we go to the next level, *cidākāśa*, events that disturb or change this space are subtle. Our thoughts affect *cidākāśa*. Please be very clear, whether we believe it or not, our thoughts have a huge effect on the external world. Whatever thought comes, don't think that it simply comes and goes. Every thought is energy. It manifests as something in the external world. The problem is that we are unaware of the effect. The effect is subtle so our mind cannot see that what happens is because of those thoughts we entertained.

Our mind thinks something. It affects this space. These changes are projected into the external world, yet our mind is unable to recognize them. It is unable to see and understand that all it sees is because of itself.

So, as we advance one level higher, the changes become more subtle but the effect is more powerful. We see in *ghaṭākāśa*, the effect is limited to our body. In *cidākāśa*, our thoughts affect the space around us. The effect is seen in a bigger space. The effect is more widespread.

Now the highest level, *mahākāśa*, this level is subtler than *cidākāśa*. Any change here affects the whole universe. When something happens in this space, the whole

universe responds. When we enter this space, we realize the ultimate Truth. We merge with everything, with the whole cosmos.

The fifth element, ether, is like *mahākāśa*. Actually they are the same. Ether is everywhere. The problem is we don't know it. *Mahākāśa* pervades everything. We are just not aware of it. This space takes any shape and any form. Even in vacuum, it is there.

Understand this example: If water is compressed by a compressor, it becomes energy. If air is compressed by a compressor, it can even move a train; it becomes energy. In the same way, if ether is compressed in a particular space, in a particular shape, again that becomes energy.

An iron piece; if it is a square piece, it is different. If it is an 'I' shape, it is totally different and can be used for a different purpose. The same iron, one kilogram of iron, if it is a rectangular bar, the effect or power is totally different. If it becomes an 'I' bar, it is totally different.

Do you understand? It is a subtle concept. It is a subtle concept, but if we understand, we realize the great gift and understand the great research that our masters accomplished. They did a great sacrifice by doing all this research and creating all this wisdom and giving it to us.

Like earth, ether can be handled. It can be used in different forms and shapes. Certain techniques allow us to use the ether energy at its best, to its maximum level. When ether is put in one particular size – inside that room or inside that space – whoever lives there will be controlled by that ether and the ether is in turn controlled by them. Their thoughts affect the ether and the ether affects their thoughts.

This concept of using the energy of space or ether is the basis of *vāstu śāstra*, an ancient *vedic* science related to the science of architecture. We can live in harmony with the universal energy by constructing dwellings and structures in a manner that fits in with the spatial energy of the universe. *Vāstu śāstra* lays down details for where various activity spaces should be located in a dwelling, as well as the direction. It tells where the kitchen should be located in a house, where fire resides, in which part of the house business deals should be conducted and in which part of the house we can rest well and so on. *Vāstu śāstra* is the ancient *vedic* science of space.

Krishna says, 'How the wind rests in the space, in the same way the universe rests in Me.'

Don't think space is emptiness. Space is not just emptiness. It is energy. Just because we are not able to see, we can't say it is emptiness. It is energy. Just as the air rests in the space, our being, the whole universe including our being, we all rest in the Divine. Krishna says, 'All beings rest in Me.'

Can you see why Krishna calls all that He is speaking of a secret? He is being very careful as to whom He is telling this secret or confidential knowledge. He wants to tell all this to a qualified person. Arjuna, also called Kaunteya, son of Kunti, is both a friend and a disciple. He knows now that Arjuna is ready to take in this secret.

Actually till this point Krishna has slowly prepared Arjuna. Now He knows Arjuna is ready to take in some truths, some secrets of this universe. If Krishna had told these strong truths in the beginning of the Gita, Arjuna would not have understood. Arjuna had so many doubts at the start.

If we see the first chapter of the Gita, only Arjuna speaks and Krishna listens. Then Krishna speaks from Chapter 2 onwards. Arjuna's questions get answered one by one. After a while, Arjuna turns silent. He does not ask. He absorbs the ultimate knowledge delivered by Krishna.

In these two verses, Krishna talks about the creation and destruction of the universe. He makes bold statements. Only an enlightened master can make such bold statements because he speaks from experience. Some people do not agree with what I say. They think their own understandings are correct. When they tell me, '*Swamiji*, how can you say that? In so-and-so book, it is written like this,' I laugh and let it pass.

First of all, they did not understand what exactly was written in those scriptures and then they tell me I am wrong. What can be done? Even if I argue, they won't listen. All the old people are dangerous! Whenever I go for a discourse, I see if there are old people. They think they have seen everything and do not want to listen to what I say.

Here Krishna makes bold statements and truths and He knows Arjuna is ready to take in those truths. He talks about the creation of the universe. According to Hindu mythology, the universe is created each time Brahma, the creator, blinks. In the first verse Krishna says, 'The whole material manifestation enters into Him when the universe is destroyed and He projects it again to create the universe.'

Understand that when Krishna says, 'The universe enters Me,' He refers to the cosmic Krishna, the cosmic consciousness, and not the Krishna we see in human form. Let us try to understand this very deeply.

For a long time, the Big Bang theory was used to explain the creation of the universe. It said that there was a big ball of fire and an explosion. After the explosion some smaller parts cooled down to become planets, meteors and asteroids. Bigger parts stayed on as stars and suns. In the theory of evolution on planet earth, Darwin talks about how life originated.

However, modern science disproves these theories. Modern scientific findings go towards what ancient Indian scriptures, the *Upanishads* said thousands of years ago.

According to the Taittreya Upanishad, first there was ether. From ether, came air. From air came fire. Then water appeared and finally earth appeared. From earth, other living beings appeared.

Actually, this order has a deeper meaning. It shows the process of evolution from a subtle form of energy that is ether, to a gross form that is earth. We feel gross forms through the senses; however as it goes to subtler forms of energy, we must experience it. Can we hold water like we can hold earth in our hands? Can we feel fire the way we feel water? Can we see air like we see fire? No. As the energy goes from gross to subtle, the way we experience it changes. Earth is tangible matter; ether is intangible energy. The subtlest form of energy is ether and we can only experience this through meditation.

Krishna says at the end of each age, called a *kalpa* in Sanskrit, the materially manifested universe with all its creations merges back into Him. If we analyze the Big Bang theory, the first question we ask is, 'Where did the ball of fire come from?' The Big Bang theory does not answer this fundamental question. You see, the so-called scientists have no answer to this question yet.

However Krishna, the inner scientist, answers this question in these verses. Science has now proven that the vacuum has something in it. The subtlest form of energy, ether, is present in the vacuum. Science has proven it. See how science is tending towards spirituality.

This whole universe was created from ether and it goes back into ether again. All that we see outside as the material world is the manifestation of this subtle form of energy. The material world is the gross form of energy that we can see. We can only see the gross form. We can only feel the gross form because of our level of consciousness.

When Krishna says, 'All material manifestation enters Me,' He means, it enters the universal consciousness. We should understand that the gross form or material world that we see is a manifestation of subtle energy. Everything we see and feel using our senses is part of the universal consciousness. The problem is that we see it only as matter.

If we see things as matter, we are caught up in that level only. As long as we think that they are matter, as long as we are in the gross level, we run after them. Our mind starts operating and says, 'These things will make you happy; go and get them.' You see, how our mind works just by a simple misunderstanding. When we get this thought, the rat race starts, and our suffering starts.

When we understand that whatever we see and feel and whatever we run after are only material manifestations of the subtle energy, we operate in a different plane. We see the futility of the race we are running. We see everything in a different way. We realize that they are a projection of our own inner self.

Please be very clear: All material things that we see are a manifestation of our inner self. Our desires and thoughts are projected as the materials that we see. However, in actual fact, there is no such thing as material, separate and independent things. Everything is one; everything is energy.

Krishna says that only He can create and destroy this universe at His will. This whole universe is a manifestation or a projection of our own self. Someone said, 'We make our own world.' This sentence has a deep meaning. All that we see as the world or universe is what we create. All relationships are projections of either our insecurities or our desires. We call someone father or mother because we need someone to take care of us in childhood. After we grow up, we need a wife or life-partner to take care of us. After we grow old, we need our children to take care of us.

We create our world through our needs or desires. Only an enlightened being sees the real truth, as it is. Once we understand everything is a mirror image of our own self, we become enlightened. Once we realize that we, along with everything else around us, are part of the same energy or consciousness, we become enlightened.

In these two verses, Krishna says this truth clearly. Every material manifestation is created by Him and goes back into Him. Everything is part of the same energy system or the universal consciousness. He says only He can create and destroy it at

His will, which means the world that we see, the universe that we perceive, is a projection of our own Self.

Q: Swamiji, when you tell us to ignore the material world and focus on the energy behind matter, it is difficult. Whatever we see is matter; we do not have the sensitivity to see the energy. How to go beyond material manifestation?

At the level where you are, use your intellect, intelligence, and your logic to understand that everything that you see around you is perishable and impermanent. All you have to work with as of now is your intellect, so use it; however use it to understand this truth instead of ignoring it.

You know from your own experience, as well as that of others, that every single material manifestation that you see in the world comes with an expiry date. It may be possible that some things may outlive you but not for long. Even mountains crumble, rivers dry up, and oceans recede or rise. Nothing stays the way it is.

You also know from experience that what you perceive as enjoyment from contact with material objects is a time-barred experience. Nothing lasts forever, be it food, be it sex, or be it an event or experience that you love. You have ups and downs in the way you experience pleasures and pains. Nothing is permanent.

Māyā, illusion, does not mean that the life you lead is not reality. It means that it is not permanent. It means that it is not the ultimate reality. It means there is something beyond it that is permanent.

The suffering that you undergo in your life and life experiences is because of this confusion. We expect things to remain the same. We expect pleasures to continue. We expect our loved ones to live forever and happily. Neither will happen, nor can happen.

First, you need to drill this into your logic system, because this is logical and your intellect cannot argue with this. Once your logic accepts the impermanence of material things and the transience of material experiences, it starts to wonder whether there is anything permanent out there, anything that comes without an expiry date.

If your resolve is strong enough, this understanding too will happen. It happens because it is a truth that is built within you. It is not something that you need to make an effort to understand. You only need to uncover a few layers of ignorance to see the truth.

What comes without an expiry date is the energy that surrounds us and is within us. The awareness that these are the same is enlightenment. Once that awareness happens, you do not need logic to remind you that matter is perishable. You know that it is and all that is permanent is energy, whatever name you give it: God, Buddha, Krishna consciousness, Christ, Allah or Nithyananda.



How To Be Unattached

9.9 O Dhananjaya, all this work does not bind Me.

I am ever unattached and indifferent.

9.10 The material nature of prakṛti works under My direction, O Son of Kunti, and

creates all moving and unmoving beings through My energy of māyā.

By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

9.11 Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form.

They do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that is.

9.12 Those who are thus deluded are demonic and atheistic.

In their deluded condition, their hopes for liberation, their result-oriented actions and their culture of knowledge become false and useless.

Being attached or bound to what we do or what we have is a major hurdle in realizing our Self. Krishna says He is not bound to this universe. This is the reason, He says, that keeps Him unaffected when the universe is created and when it is destroyed.

Krishna says He is not at all affected when such a big thing is happening. The whole universe is being born out of Him and it is getting destroyed. Even then He is not affected because He is not bound to the universe. It is because He is a mere spectator.

Let us understand this in the context of daily life. When we start to internalize these great truths in small things that we do, a great change happens in us. Krishna speaks of a divine play. He talks in terms of the universe being created and destroyed from universal consciousness. If we understand His words, we can apply them to day-to-day activities. That is why Bhagavad Gita is a beautiful scripture. It is a technique applicable for any age or generation and which can be easily internalized.

When we understand this truth, we feel a great sense of liberation. You see, we become attached or bound to what we have. We think that all we have is ours. When we create that attachment, we create a strong bond. Be very clear, now the problem has started.

A small story:

A man who was born blind goes to a doctor for a cure. After examining his eyes, the doctor says the blindness can be cured. He tells the blind man a small operation needs to be done and his eyesight can be brought back and then he won't need his walking stick any more. The blind man is surprised.

He asks, 'Doctor, I understand that you will operate on me, and my eyesight can be restored and I will be able to see everything. But I do not understand why I won't need my walking stick.'

You see the attachment the blind man has to the walking stick? He understood that he would be able to see; yet he could not let go of his walking stick. In the same way, we hold onto a walking stick though we have eyes to see. We are not blind; however we are bound to material possessions, relationships and emotions.

Let us discuss in detail how these different kinds of attachments bind us. Our material possessions create greed and fear in us. We are either in fear of losing them or we want to get more and more of them. We run after them. We attach so much importance to them that getting more and more of them becomes our only goal. Naturally when we have so much, we create a fear of losing them.

The problem is we associate ourselves with material possessions. This is what we understand as life. Again and again, we run after them and forget who we are. So many people are in the rat race. They spend their lives accumulating money, bungalows and cars. And at the end of their life, they regret; they wonder what they have done in their lives.

This is what attachment to material possessions does. It creates greed and fear. We create goals to get more and more material wealth. Even if we have enough, we are not satisfied. We want more and more. We run and run till we drop dead. Now when we have so much of it, we fear losing it. We hold onto it as if it were our property. We are in a state of continuous fear.

This is one kind of attachment. There is another kind of attachment. We are attached to people. We create strong bonds in relationships. These are also attachments. We start possessing people. The possessiveness grows so strong that we suffer when someone dies. We become so dependent on persons that our whole life seems to lose meaning when they die.

Actually, what happens in this kind of bondage is that we define ourselves based on the opinions of other people. We know ourselves only by the certificates of others. In other words, we energize ourselves based on others. So we constantly hold on to that relationship because it gives us energy; that relationship helps us define ourselves.

So when a person dies, we feel depressed because whatever we were holding to very tightly was the source of energy for us. That was defining us till now and now it is no longer there. It has disappeared. So our whole system is shaken.

Now there is the third kind of bondage or attachment. It is related to our thoughts and emotions. Whenever something happens, we start linking it with our past and start fantasizing about the future. Be very clear, a thought arises because our mind jumps from the past to the future. When a thought arises, we link up that thought with other thoughts.

Let us say, you see a dog. As soon as you see it, you go to the past when you were bitten by a dog. Then your mind goes somewhere, probably a hospital. Then your mind goes to the doctor who gave you medical care. The doctor has nothing to do with a dog on the road, but this is how your mind associates and takes you with it! You create a chain between two thoughts. You link different thoughts.

Do a simple exercise. Take a piece of paper and write down all your thoughts. Do not edit anything. Note down everything that comes into your mind. Do this for five minutes. Just for five minutes. Then look through that list of thoughts. You will see what a mess is going on inside the head! You will see that none of the thoughts are linked to each other. They are random, unrelated, illogical thoughts.

None of the thoughts are linked to each other; however, we start to link them. We create a shaft binding all these thoughts. Each thought is like a bubble in a fish

tank. If you see bubbles rising in a fish tank, they are unrelated, unconnected and disjointed. However we create a shaft and link them up. We attach ourselves with that shaft and start experiencing them. We start participating in the thoughts. We let the thoughts control us.

In the same way, we deal with our emotions also. We create a shaft of all our pains and all our joys. If we see that our pain shaft is longer than the joy shaft, we conclude that we had a painful life; we had a miserable life. Otherwise, we say we have a happy life. Yet if we look deeply, each of the pains is completely unconnected and disjointed.

For example, the headache that you experience today is not related to the headache that you had one week ago. The headache that you had one week ago is not related to the headache that you felt one month ago. But what do we do? We connect all these and say we have always had headaches or migraines. We become migraine sufferers. We fail to see that all the events were independent events. We create a shaft through all these pains and come to a conclusion.

In the same way, if we have a joyful experience, we want to hold onto it. We want to experience that joy again. We look for that source of joy and continuously run after it. This again leads us into the rat race.

Here Krishna says He is neutral. How do we get ourselves unconnected from these attachments? Please understand that being unconnected from material possessions does not mean you leave everything and go away. Being unconnected from relationships does not mean breaking your relationships, forgetting your children, parents and others.

Please understand this very deeply. Being neutral or unconnected has a deep meaning. Being neutral means being a spectator. It is like this: When you watch a movie, you watch something on the screen. Do you become an actor in that movie? No. You watch it and let it go.

In the same way, we need to watch attachments. When we watch them as a spectator, we get detached from them. What do I mean by that? When we watch our materialistic wealth, we will not run after it. We do our job because we love it, not because we want to accumulate wealth. A scientist should do research because he likes to do it, not because he wants something out of it. When that is the attitude, the universe starts showering. The results happen of their own accord. The materialistic wealth comes on its own.

In relationships also, we must be a spectator. When we stop seeing someone as a possession and when we become a spectator to the relationship, our dependency on that person and expectations from that person drop. When dependencies and expectations drop, there is no give and take in the relationship. There is only giving. The relationship becomes stronger.

When we become a spectator to our thoughts and emotions, we feel a great sense of liberation. All we have to do is break the shaft that we create between different unconnected thoughts and emotions. We have to 'unclutch'. When we see thoughts like passing clouds in the sky, we stop associating ourselves with them. We are no longer controlled by them.

Be very clear, being a spectator to thoughts does not mean that we suppress or destroy thoughts. We are not Brahma, the Creator, or Vishnu, the Sustainer, or Shiva, the Rejuvenator. When we become a spectator, we go beyond these three states. We transcend the trinity.

By being a spectator, we remain unaffected and unattached to what happens in and around us. This is the truth. If we can internalize this completely, we will be enlightened this very minute!

Krishna says that although He is a mere spectator, everything happens under His supervision. Here He shows His authority. He says the material world is created and annihilated according to His will through the power of *prakṛti*, Nature and the energy of *māyā*, Illusion. Actually Krishna is repeating what He said in the previous verse. He thinks that this concept is important for Arjuna to understand. So He repeats it again and again.

Krishna wants to clearly get this idea across to Arjuna. The whole material manifestation is a projection of the energy of universal consciousness. This is what is reflected within us in our individual consciousness. We create what we see and what we wish to see. We project as reality what we wish to believe. It is like this. You stand in front of a mirror and see yourself. Now all that you see outside you is a projection of what you have inside you.

He says, 'I am the supreme power.' Everything happens under His supervision. What He says is simple. Whatever happens is a drama of creation and annihilation through Nature and Illusion. Krishna, the director and producer of this cosmic drama, stands unmoved as a spectator.

This truth is reflected within us, too. We create and destroy ourselves. Everything, our happiness, our pains, our fantasies, our sorrows, our relationships

are created by us. If we see from a higher level, we influence the whole universe. Krishna shows how powerful we are, how powerful our inner Self is. Whether we believe it or not, it is the truth. We create everything that we see, feel and hear. That is the power of our inner Self. Yet we do not stay detached the way Krishna does.

Our thoughts and inner chatter have a tremendous impact. The cosmic consciousness responds to our thoughts. All the enlightened masters have talked about it. What we think and how we think affects what happens around us.

You have seen people who always shout and yell at others. Some people keep shaking their legs. All this happens because of inner restlessness. If something goes wrong, we blame others. We become irritated by small things. All this is because there is so much restlessness inside us. However instead of looking inside, what do we do? We blame others.

We see negativity around us because there are negativities inside us. Because of such thoughts inside us, we project them outside by becoming frustrated and irritated at small things. You see, this is how we create our own world. Because of our thoughts and inner chatter, we create a world full of negativities outside.

When we observe children, they are always blissful. Have you ever seen a child becoming frustrated or irritated? No. You may have seen children build castles with playing cards by stacking them one on top of the other and arranging them in a particular order. They are completely immersed in it. Even if some cards fall, they do not become frustrated or irritated. They once again try to stack them.

In children there is no inner chatter, no conditionings. The world they project or manifest outside is blissful. They create a beautiful world because they do not have negativities inside them. Understand the power of thoughts. A person is blissful not because of what happens outside him; it is because of what is inside him.

One more important thing: There is a difference between being happy and being blissful. Happiness happens inside because of external factors. If we feel joy inside because of something happening outside us, that joy is happiness. The problem with happiness is the source. If suddenly the external source disappears, our happiness also disappears. So our internal state is affected by an external source. The outer world is affecting our inner world.

However, bliss is not like that. Being blissful does not depend on external sources. If we are at peace internally, we express that bliss. No external event or happening affects this state. Bliss is eternal; however happiness is temporary. When we are blissful inside, we project the same bliss outside. When we are in that state,

we enjoy everything that happens outside us. We enjoy the external material manifestation because we are blissful inside.

Please understand that as long as we enjoy the external material manifestation of our inner bliss as a spectator, it is fine. However, when we participate in it, when we try to possess that bliss, when we try to hold onto that bliss, that bliss is gone. It disappears because our mind has come in. Be very clear, when we think from our mind, when we enjoy something from our mind, it is not bliss.

So in this verse Krishna tells us clearly that we create our own world. The material manifestation is solely because of our inner Self and nothing external is responsible for it.

In the next verse He says, 'Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My ultimate nature, eternal nature, as the supreme Lord of all that is.'

Here Krishna uses a strong word: 'Fools'. Enlightened masters don't edit their words. They don't edit. They speak the truth as it is. Usually, normal people edit because they fear others' opinions.

See, normally in all your minds, three processes happen: first, words are created, then edited and then finally presented. Creating, editing and presenting. In masters, these three processes don't happen. Straightaway what is created is presented.

One American university professor who attended many of our discourses said, 'Swamiji, you are speaking continuously for hours.' Of course, if you see our website, everyday somewhere in the world there is a discourse. For the last two and a half years, there is not a single day that has gone by without a program. Not a single day! Always somewhere or the other, there is some program happening. Some program, some lecture, something is going on.

He asked me, 'How are you able to continuously speak without notes?' Please be very clear, here also in front of me, only the verses are there. Only the book of verses is here. There are no other notes. I see these verses in front of me so that the original pronunciation is not lost. And the original form should be maintained. We respect the verses. We don't alter the verses. I can say that the *Vedas* is the purest and most unadulterated scripture. No alteration is allowed, even the tune can't be changed. Even the tune in which they are chanted can't be changed. The *chhandas* (meter) cannot be changed. The same tune is preserved. It is not learnt by heart by reading. It is heard, *śruti*; it is heard. By hearing, they know by heart.

That is why the tune cannot be changed. The words cannot be changed and the tune cannot be changed. Just to preserve the purity, I read the verse from the original. I don't have notes.

He asked, 'How are you able to speak continuously without notes, *Swamiji*?' This is the first lecture where I am keeping something in front of me. If you have attended earlier discourses, whether it is a four-day program or five-day program, I never keep notes. This is the first time I am keeping something in front of me. This is the first time I am commenting on Sanskrit literature. So I keep the Sanskrit verses in front of me.

He asked me, 'How are you able to continuously speak?' I told him, 'Because the process is easy in me. I don't edit. I don't have the three mechanisms: creating words, editing and presenting. Usually, for all people, these three mechanisms have to happen.'

Then he put one more question, '*Swamiji*, speaking for hours is different. For me, I must prepare three hours even for a one-hour lecture. If I must speak one hour on the ideas or the concepts I am supposed to present, I must prepare for three hours. I know for sure that you don't have time to prepare for so many discourses.'

In our meditation camps, sometimes the program is eighteen hours long per day. For eighteen hours people listen to the talks and meditate. In India the same program is for four days, about forty hours or more. He said, 'How can you prepare for such long discourses? How do you speak without preparation?'

I told him, 'You prepare because it has not become your experience.' Then I asked him, 'If somebody asks your name, do you prepare? Do you look at your notes and tell them your name?' Your name has become your experience, your being. So you immediately respond. Similarly, whatever I speak is from my experience. So I don't need to prepare. I don't need any rehearsal. Because it is my experience, I spontaneously express it. Nothing needs to be prepared. Preparation is unnecessary.

One more thing, why do people fear public speaking? Why do they again and again prepare and rehearse? They fear that they may speak what they really think! They do not want to express what is going on inside them. They want to express polished words, decent words and clear words. They fear they may express by mistake what is going on inside! They may utter words that they are thinking. That is why they again and again prepare.

Only for a person whose inner chattering has become pure, not only his words, his thinking has also become pure. That person can talk in a relaxed way for hours in public. To speak in public, that too in a relaxed and casual way, we need our inner being to be in a pure way. Only then can we talk whatever comes. We can be in such a relaxed mood. Otherwise, continuously we must edit.

If we edit and speak, within half an hour or one hour, we are tired. We feel drained. We do not radiate the same energy. Speaking is a big job for people who edit and speak. They cannot be relaxed. They cannot be joyful.

Masters don't edit; they express whatever they think. Because their thinking has become so pure, they don't need to edit. Even if they use sharp words, they are spoken to awaken you.

Here Krishna uses the word, '*mūḍhaḥ*', meaning 'fool'. 'Fools deride Me.' He gives a jolt to the ego. He gives a jolt. 'Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My eternal nature as the supreme Lord of all that is.' He says, 'When I land in the world in the human form as a master, people, fools, deride me. They don't understand.'

He again and again tells this to Arjuna, 'Don't think that just because I am in the body, I am your friend. Don't think that I am the person who was sitting in Brindavan (the place where Krishna spent his infant years), who is your own friend. Don't think I am that person. I am the energy that takes care of the whole world. I have come down in this form to liberate all of you. So only fools deride Me, fools miss Me. Don't miss, Arjuna, understand the ultimate nature of Me and liberate yourself.'

In these verses, Krishna tells some interesting truths. These were true during His time and they are true today. When an enlightened master is in his body, people do not accept him. When the master lives in his body, people ignore him. In fact, people do not even want to accept that he can be an enlightened master.

People stay away from the master when he is living. However, when the master is no longer in the body, people visit his final resting place, offer flowers, and do all kinds of things. This has happened to all enlightened masters. Jesus was crucified. Ramakrishna was considered a mad priest. When Ramakrishna entered into an ecstatic mood, people said that he was acting.

However now, if you go to Kolkata, thousands of people visit Dakshineswar, the place where Ramakrishna spent most of His life. Now people from all around the world go to Ramakrishna mission centers. Dakshineswar has become a

pilgrimage center. People worship Ramakrishna; they keep his photo in their home, in their wallets.

You see, over time nothing has changed. In fact, it has become worse. The level of consciousness in people is affected by television and movies. When Ramakrishna was alive in the 19th century, these things were not there. Then he was called a madman. People made fun of him. However now after one hundred years, when we are constantly bombarded with unnecessary things, thousands of people go to Dakshineswar. They worship him. They call him an incarnation. They call him God.

When I am in the ashram in Bidadi, many people come with speculation. They have questions about what I say, what I wear and everything I do. They say, 'You are so young. How can you be enlightened?' Some say, 'If you are enlightened, why do you wear a golden *rudrākṣa* necklace? Why do you charge money for courses?' They have questions and questions and questions.

These same people will come to my final resting place after one hundred years and offer flowers on it. They will accept me as their guru when I am not sitting in the ashram in human form.

Krishna says, 'Fools lose Me when I come in human form.' He calls them fools. This is the truth. When an enlightened master is in human form, we do not accept him as a master. Only after the master leaves the body do we pay our respects to the master. What is the reason? Why do people again and again do this?

You see, when the master is in his body, when he is still in human form, our mind sees him as another human being. We see him like anybody else, another person. Then our ego comes between him and us. It reasons, 'He is another human like me. Why should I listen to him? Why do people pray to him? Why is he preaching to me?' All these questions come. That is it. We decide we don't have to follow another human being and go back.

Please be very clear, a simple act of ego makes us miss a living enlightened master. Our mind cannot accept it. It always boosts our ego and keeps us away from an enlightened master. Our being wants it; however our mind and ego create a strong wall of questions between the master and us. We reason out everything that the master says. If there is a continuous inner chatter in us when we approach a master, our mind and ego take over our being. We miss the opportunity.

And one more thing, some people know that a person is a master. They know what he says is good for them; however they escape. They run away or make

excuses not to meet him. This is because they know that the enlightened master can see through them. They do not want anybody to know what a mess they have created in themselves. They fear that the enlightened master will read what goes on inside them. They want to escape that transformation.

We should understand why an enlightened master comes to earth. If we know this, we will not be fools. We will not miss or run away. We should understand what an enlightened master is. If we understand, then we can break the wall between the master and us and let our being experience the master's energy.

A small story from Ramakrishna:

Three men walk near a village. They see an orchard. One of them jumps into the orchard to see what is happening. When he goes into the orchard, he sees a big party going on inside. He sees so much joy and bliss inside the orchard. Everyone enjoys, dances in ecstasy. They blissfully enjoy every moment. This man also starts enjoying. He forgets about the two men outside the orchard.

After some time, the two men who stand outside get impatient. The second man says, 'Let me go and see what happened.' He enters the orchard. He sees people dancing, singing, enjoying. However, before he joins the party, this man thinks he should tell the third man standing outside the orchard about what he has seen. He has concern for the third man. So he tells the third man what is going on inside the orchard and runs back into the orchard and joins the party.

Now this third man goes in. He sees the bliss everyone is in. He thinks, 'I should tell everyone in the village about this; everyone should enjoy; everyone should dance in ecstasy.' So he goes out and tells everyone in the village and brings them into the orchard.

Enlightened masters are like the third man. They have experienced the truth, the bliss. They are the embodiments of compassion. They want everyone to know the truth. They are on a mission. Be very clear, the only aim of an enlightened master is to get everyone enlightened. There is no ulterior motive of the master.

People ask me lots of questions. Why this? Why that? People look at me with suspicion. They think by telling them something, I make some profit. If I suggest to them to attend some course, they think I will make money. They run away thinking I want to convert them to a *sanyāsi*. They do not understand that an enlightened master is beyond all that. They miss the opportunity of being with a master because of their own ignorance.

A small story:

In a cold and snowy place, a snake lay on the ground frozen like a wooden stick. A passing blind man stumbled upon it and picked it up. Feeling it, the blind man was happy and thought, 'I have a good walking stick.'

An enlightened master, passing that way, saw what he was doing and warned, 'Oh sir, that is not a walking stick; it is a snake and soon there will be sunlight. Once the sun comes out, the snake will be free and become normal and will harm you.' The blind man rejected the master's advice. He thought the master was trying to take away his walking stick. He continued to hold the stick. When the sun came out, the snake bit him and he realized the truth as he was dying.

In the same way, whenever enlightened masters try to save mankind, people make their life hell, due to their ignorance and doubts. We must understand that an enlightened master does not have desires. So he does not have ulterior motives. All he wants is everyone should experience the bliss that he has experienced.

In the case of a normal man, when he takes birth, he carries over desires from his previous birth. These are called *vāsanās*. However, an enlightened master does not have desires or *vāsanās*; he is in a no-mind state. His spirit can merge directly into the universal energy. Whenever there is a need on planet earth, the energy of the enlightened master is sent down to earth with a mission to fulfill.

Be very clear, nobody can help when we create a wall of doubt between the master and us. The master can help only if we break the wall, only if we allow the master to take charge. As long as we hold onto our ego, we remain a fool. If we meet an enlightened master, that is the best thing that can happen to us. Now it is up to us to take advantage of it or miss it. Krishna tells everyone: if you miss an enlightened master, you are a fool. If we think out of ego that an enlightened master is like any other human, we lose the chance of knowing the truth; we lose the chance for enlightenment.

Q: Swamiji, what does Krishna mean when He says, 'Follow Me, I am the supreme Godhead?'

If you don't follow the master, you will follow your *saṁskāras*; you will follow your ego. Be very clear, when I say follow me or follow Krishna, it does not mean

that I am asking you to follow the six-foot Nithyananda or the dark-complexioned Krishna. It means, follow the universal Krishna, or the *nityānanda* which means eternal bliss, or the universal consciousness.

A group of Krishna devotees visited our ashram in India. During my discourse, they asked questions, 'In the Gita, Krishna says He is the supreme personality. How can you say that you are on the same plane as Krishna?' These people call themselves Krishna devotees and claim to have read the Gita many times; however the whole essence of Krishna's words is lost in their understanding. They are stuck in the physical form of Krishna. They are stuck in the names and words. I tell people, when Krishna and Jesus meet, they will hug each other; however the cows of Krishna and the sheep of Jesus will fight with each other!

Anyhow, people who miss the living enlightened masters are fools according to Krishna. If they let their ego decide, they will miss a wonderful opportunity. They will fall back into the cycle of birth and death.

One more thing, if someone chants 'Rama, Rama, Rama' a million times, it does not mean he will be liberated. So many people chant some *mantras*. They feel proud that they do it. They read Vishnu Sahasranama that contains 1008 names of Vishnu. They tell people, 'I read this; I read that.' However, when someone gossips beside them, one ear listens to the gossip while chanting! They chant the *mantra*, yet the ears listen to the gossip. Their mind and body are totally disconnected. Some people stop between chants and add their valuable suggestions to the gossip as well!

If someone follows Krishna or Rama in that way, there is no point. If there is no awareness of our actions, there is no point in doing those rituals. I tell people that only when we add spirit to a ritual, it becomes spiritual.

One more important thing, if we do prayers and rituals with ego, we fall back into the cycle of life and death. The villain of Ramayana (the Indian epic), Ravana, was a great king. He was devout and prayed to Shiva. He was devoted to Shiva; however he had ideas about Sita, the wife of Rama. He was a great ruler. Lanka had castles of gold. It was a prosperous country. People were happy with the king but what is the use? Ravana prayed to Shiva with the ego that he is doing all that. He was deluded by his illusion, by his ego. He did not know who Rama was. He did not see the enlightenment in Rama. Soon he was killed by Rama.

This is what Krishna says in these verses. You see, even if we do all kinds of *pūjā* or prayer, as long as our ego comes in the way, all our activities towards God are useless. Please be very clear, we may pray ten times a day, we may think of God one hundred times a day. However we must analyze how we approach God. It should be out of gratitude rather than ego. When we take God's name to show off to people, we do nothing but waste time.

People think they can reach heaven by donating thousands of rupees to temples. They build temples with selfish ideas. Be very clear, nobody waits at the gates of heaven keeping notes of our activities. Nobody is going to take us to God because we donated money to God. We can build temples and we can donate money to temples. When we do that, do it with devotion; do it with gratitude. We should not do it to get our names engraved on the temple walls. Do not let ego take over.

Krishna does not ask us to follow His form. He asks us to follow His energy. He wants us to imbibe Him, internalize Him and follow Him.

When Buddha said, '*Buddham sharanam gacchāmi*,' it was not in reference to the physical form of Buddha; it was about the enlightened energy of Buddha. This energy can only be followed by adhering to His teachings, the *dhmma*, and working on His mission, the *sangha*.

Follow Krishna by understanding Krishna consciousness, not by following what you imagine to be your understanding of the form of Krishna. Krishna consciousness is the same as Shiva consciousness or Buddha consciousness or Christ consciousness or Nithyananda consciousness. There is no difference.

That is why Krishna says, 'These fools mock at Me when I come in human form. Don't mock the form, follow the consciousness. You will no longer be a fool. You will be in eternal bliss!'



Worship Me In Any Form But With Devotion

9.13 O son of Pritha, the great souls who are not deluded know me as unchangeable.

They are devoted to Me as they know I am the cause of all creation.

9.14 Those with firm resolve perpetually worship Me with devotion.

They sing My glories, striving with determination, prostrating to Me,

9.15 Some worship Me by acquiring and spreading wisdom of the Self.

Others worship Me in my non-dual form, or dual form or universal form.

Krishna speaks about *bhakti* or devotion in these verses.

You see, devotion can be one of the most powerful ways to reach God. Many saints showed the world the path of devotion. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was devoted to Krishna. He sang songs in Krishna's glory. He danced in ecstasy while singing about Krishna. Meera was another devotee of Krishna who was in love with Him. Meera's devotional songs, *Meera bhajans*, are sung even today to show her devotion towards Krishna.

Be very clear, devotion is one of the most powerful ways to reach God; however it depends on how we express devotion. Many people go to temples. Some people have a habit of going to a particular temple every week. If somebody asks, they say, 'Oh, every Saturday I pray to Lord Venkateshwara. Every Tuesday I go to the Hanuman temple.' Going to temples becomes a fashion statement.

Making mechanical visits to the temple is not devotion. It is just a sort of ego. We mostly go to temples to ask for something. Our devotion to Lord Venkateshwara is dependent on how much He answers our prayers. If we ask for

something and He gives it, then Venkateshwara is great; otherwise we switch gods! We go to the god who we think will grant our wishes.

A small story:

Three village men set off to the city to earn money. Before leaving, they went to their village temple. They prayed, 'O God, we are going to the city to earn money. Please help us become rich. If we become rich, after one year, whatever money we earn, we will donate fifty percent of it to you. We will put that money in the collection box. Please help us.' They made a business deal with God, a profit-sharing deal.

In the city, they started a business and after one year, they made a million rupees. They remembered their promise to God. So they went back to their village. On their way, they started thinking. Each of them calculated how much they will get. One million rupees is a lot of money. If they give fifty percent to God, how much will they have for themselves?

Once they reached their village, before going to the temple, one of them said, 'Why does God need so much money? He is rich anyway. Let us think of another way to show our devotion and gratitude to God.'

The other two immediately agreed. Just see how the human mind works! When they had nothing, they wanted to give God; now when they have, they don't want to let go of it.

Anyhow, they came up with a plan. They told God, 'We will make a circle on the ground. We will throw all the money up in the air. Whatever falls in the circle is for us and whatever falls outside, we will donate to you.'

Then they thought, 'When we throw the money up, more money will fall outside the circle.' Now once again their greed started. They thought, 'No, this is not a good idea.' So they revised the plan. They decided to create a bigger circle and throw the money upwards. Whatever money fell in, they decided to give God. But now they felt that more money would fall inside the circle.

As they were discussing, one of them looked up and said, 'Oh God, you are sitting up there. You know how much money you want. So we will throw all the money up. However much money you want, keep and we will take the rest!'

This is our devotion! We make business deals. We pray to God, but not with devotion. As long as God gives what we want, he is our God; otherwise He is no longer God. Prayer should express our devotion, gratitude, and love to God. All great devotees of Krishna and Rama showed complete gratitude and love. When devotion reaches that state, they reach the ultimate consciousness.

One more thing, prayers are powerful; however, we should not get stuck at prayers. Prayers are powerful in the initial stages when we pray as we go towards God. Let the prayers express devotion rather than asking for boons. We should go beyond words. When we pray, we are stuck in words. We should go beyond words. Our devotion should help us see the ultimate energy behind the idol of Krishna or Rama.

Actually, complete devotion puts us in a completely different plane. When we show our devotion to someone, we surrender ourselves to him or her. Have you heard the story of Prahlad?

He was a young boy less than ten years old. His father Hiranyakashipu was a great devotee of Brahma, the creator. Hiranyakashipu does intense penance and asks Brahma for a boon. He asks to be made immortal; however Brahma says that is impossible. Hiranyakashipu then comes up with lots of conditions such as: he should be killed by an animal, a bird, a human, or anything living or non-living, either during the day or the night. Brahma grants him that boon.

Hiranyakashipu thinks his boon covers all the ways in which he might be killed. So he declares himself to be God. He asks all the people in his kingdom to worship him as God. So people worship his idol. All the chants include his name. However Hiranyakashipu's son, Prahlad, turns out to be a great devotee of Lord Vishnu. He is a little boy, yet his devotion to Vishnu is strong.

Obviously his father is not happy about this. He tries to persuade Prahlad; however it is of no use. The more Hiranyakashipu talks to his son, the more intense Prahlad's devotion becomes. Hiranyakashipu then tries to get Prahlad killed through various ways. Prahlad worships Vishnu with such great devotion that Vishnu saves Prahlad every time. Prahlad prays to Vishnu every second, with every breath. His devotion is deep. Even when he is about to be executed, he prays to Vishnu with gratitude and love. His devotion is that of surrender rather than a prayer asking Vishnu to save his life. This is the story of Narasimha *avatār*, the incarnation of Vishnu in which He is half-lion and half-human.

Krishna continues to explain to Arjuna the ways in which people worship Him. Here he talks about the path of *jñāna*, knowledge: Those following the path of knowledge try to worship Me by acquiring and propagating knowledge.

A small story:

A philosopher who had only a single pair of shoes went to a cobbler and asked him to repair his shoes.

The cobbler told him, 'I am sorry, but I closed my shop just now. Please come again tomorrow.'

The philosopher said, 'But I only have this pair of shoes and I cannot walk without shoes.'

The cobbler answered, 'Okay, I will lend you a pair of shoes then.'

The philosopher was shocked. He shouted, 'What? You want me to wear other people's shoes? Who do you think I am?'

The cobbler replied, 'Why do you refuse to wear other people's shoes when you can carry people's ideas and thoughts in your head?'

Understand that mere accumulation of knowledge only increases ego. Please be very clear: mere accumulation of spiritual knowledge does not give enlightenment. Internalize the knowledge and relate it to experiential wisdom. Then the breeze of joy will flow into your life.

How can we internalize knowledge? How can we embed that knowledge inside? Do meditation. When you are alone, think and contemplate upon great truths. Deeply immersing ourselves in contemplation is a meditation. Question those truths and try to find answers within yourself.

Swami Vivekananda beautifully says, 'Even if we sit day in and day out, and memorize all the books in all the libraries, nothing happens, except that our head becomes a little big, that is all! Just know one single dimension of the truth and imbibe that completely, that is more than enough. It can do wonders. Take any one teaching and internalise it fully.'

Meditation helps us internalize our experience and process it into wisdom. It is an alchemy that happens internally, an alchemy that transforms our lives. Meditation helps us experience the truths.

Please understand, acquiring knowledge can be done in another way. Many people read many books and scriptures. They have shelves filled with books. They will show off their library of books to whoever visits their home. These people take great pride in showing off their knowledge.

Many people discuss spirituality. They have debates over this subject. Debates are not wrong; however the motive with which they discuss should be correct. If they discuss to show others how much they know, then they are debating purely out of ego. Please be very clear, if we show off our knowledge to show how much we know, there is no use of that knowledge.

The only way knowledge in the scriptures helps us is through experience. Instead of debating, instead of having discussions and showing off knowledge, apply it in day-to-day activities. See the results on yourself first. Experience it. Only when we experience it, we have the right to speak about it to others. Till then, they are mere words. They are nothing more than words.

Meditation helps us here, especially in the path of *jñāna* or knowledge. You see, the path of knowledge is not an easy path. In the path of devotion, all we have to do is pray to some form: either Krishna or Rama or someone, show complete devotion to that chosen God. We must completely surrender. Actually that is difficult. Really, total surrender is difficult; however, in the path of devotion, at least we have someone to talk to. We have someone to whom we can pray and look up to.

However in the path of knowledge, that is not there. There is no reference point. No one is in front of us. In this path, there is nothing called you and He. In the path of devotion, there is a clear separation between Krishna and us. In the path of knowledge, Krishna says that everything is Krishna. There is no duality. Everything is one.

When we meditate, we experience the great truths. Through meditation we connect to our inner space. All the knowledge in the scriptures, the *Upaniṣad*, talks about microcosm and macrocosm. They speak about how they are one and the same. If we talk about this knowledge without experience, all our knowledge is words. It is bookish knowledge, nothing else. We are like another library of books. The difference happens when we experience that truth. During meditation, we merge with the cosmic energy. Meditation helps us enter that space where our inner space merges with the outer space: microcosm merges with macrocosm.

Actually, all paths are one and the same. Even if we meditate on the form, after a point we will see that there is nothing like a form. Everything is the same. So even in the path of devotion, we experience the same thing as in the path of knowledge. Be very clear, nothing is better than the other. Everything is the same. The greatest enlightened master Shankara who spoke the greatest truths on non-duality wrote poems on devotion also. Swami Vivekananda was an intellectual being, yet he saluted the devotion of Ramakrishna's disciple, Gopale Ma, a devotee of Krishna.

This is what Krishna says in this verse. There are numerous paths. In the previous verse, He talked about the path of devotion. Here He talks about the path of knowledge. He says, 'Some worship the form, some worship the formless. There are many ways to worship Me.'

There are many different ways people worship the Divine; the options are many. So, we are repeatedly given many options. We have customized ways, customized paths for our personal growth. So naturally wherever one is, one can grow and reach the level we are supposed to reach. There are all sizes of ladders, all kinds of steps. We are continuously given choices, options. So, naturally one tends to take up something or the other.

He gives options among the different paths; worshipping through singing the glories of the Lord or cultivation of knowledge and offering everything at the feet of God.

Q: Swamiji, there are many stories like those of Prahlad and Meera. Can we believe them? Did they really happen?

You see, these stories should not be analyzed on the basis of whether they happened or not. It does not mean that if it did not occur in reality, we should not go deep into the message. Let us not get diverted by all that. Let us not analyze from the intellect. Let us appreciate the message of the story. Then it will not matter whether they happened or not.

Be very clear, all such things should be absorbed. The message should be absorbed. By analyzing when it happened, how it happened, whether it happened, we miss the truth. Whether they happened in 'fact' is a question historians must answer. You should be aware of the message, the truth.

Truth is different from fact. Whenever we say something, it is a fact. If someone asks the time, you say 10:30. When you say that, you do not say the truth. It is a fact. It is 10:30 here; however it is 12:30 somewhere else in the world. These are facts.

So when we listen to stories, look for the truth, not for factual details. In the story of Prahlad, let us absorb the truth of devotion. See the depth of devotion. We should internalize with what feeling Prahlad prayed to Vishnu. What were the underlying emotions behind his devotion? Complete surrender, complete trust and complete gratitude.

All great masters have expressed their experiences through stories and parables. Jesus and Buddha and many great masters have parables incorporated as part of their religion's scriptures. As experiences of these great masters, these stories are absolutely true. There is no doubt about it.

The Indian *Purāṇas*, the great epics, are not merely historical facts. They are a combination of historical events and shifts in human consciousness. Their relevance is greater as shifts in consciousness; they serve as guideposts for us to learn and follow.

As I explained in the introduction, Mahabharata is not about the fight between two warring related clans. That is a mere historical occurrence. What is important is its metaphorical significance as the fight between one's good and bad *saṁskāras*. What is relevant is the understanding that comes about as a result of studying and understanding this epic in terms of what *saṁskāras* are and how they can be eliminated.

Similarly in the stories of Prahlad, Meera and countless others, there are great truths embedded metaphorically. Once we understand these truths and apply them to our lives, we can make a significant difference in the way we live.



I Am Immortality And Death!

9.16, 17, 18, 19

I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering, I am the herb, I am the mantra, I am the clarified butter, I am the fire, and I am the oblation.

I am the supporter of the universe, the father, the mother, and the grandfather. I am the object of knowledge, the sacred syllable "OM", and also the Rig, the Yajur, and the Sama Vedas.

I am the goal, the supporter, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge, the friend, the origin, the dissolution, the foundation, the substratum, and the immutable seed. I give heat. I send, as well as withhold the rain.

I am immortality as well as death. I am also both the Eternal and the temporal, O Arjuna.

Krishna says in specific terms what He is. He is the creation of the act, the actor and the action. He is the fire to which the sacrifices are made, He is also the offering and He is the sacrifice as well. He is the seer, the seen and the seeing, all in one.

He tells Arjuna, everything that we do, everything that we see, everything that we feel, anything and everything that we know is because of Him. He says everything has come from Him. He is the seed of everything. Everything that we see is *Parāśakti* or universal energy. This is Krishna's message here.

Great masters lived in this realization. Ramana, Ramakrishna, Sadashiva Brahmendra, Raghavendra and many masters lived in this consciousness of being one with the universal consciousness. Many people could not relate to the experience of these masters or to the expression of their experience; so they considered these masters mad.

A small story:

A disciple returns to his ashram. From a distance he sees a huge crowd. Getting curious, he pushes his way through the crowd and he is shocked. A dog is trying to eat food kept in his master's vessel and his master is sitting on the dog!

The disciple does not understand. 'What nonsense is going on here? Oh master, what are you doing?' he asked, utterly confused. The master calmly replied, 'Don't you see? Some *Brahman* has kept some *Brahman* on a *Brahman*. One four legged *Brahman* tries to eat it. Another *Brahman* rides on it. Many *Brahmans* stand and watch this event. That's all.'

On hearing this, the crowd disperses saying, 'What is this madness?' However the disciple feels that nothing his master utters can be untrue.

He sits under the nearby tree and contemplates. The potent words 'plate, food, dog, master, people are all *Brahman* rings again and again in his ears. As the power of his master's words sinks in, the disciple realizes that all things surrounding him are the same Existence, *Brahman*.

He realizes and understands that divine energy blissfully moves about in each and every thing. In a moment everything changes for the disciple. The thought of 'I' drops; instead, the feeling of 'Self' dawns. The fulfilling feeling of 'All is *Brahman*, everywhere is *Brahman*, *Brahman* is within me too' is born. He has the first experience of enlightenment.

We are all *Brahman*; we are all divine. God is everywhere. Divine energy fills and overflows in all the places. This is what Krishna says in these verses.

This is the basic truth. Whether we believe it or not, accept it or not, understand it or not, this is the truth. We can call It God, Krishna, Rama, Jesus, universal energy, cosmic energy, *Parāśakti* or *Brahman*. Whatever we may call It, whatever name we may give It, It is present everywhere.

Please be very clear when we worship some idol or form, we actually worship the formless energy behind that idol. People ask me, 'Why do we keep your photo in front of us and pray to it? Why can't we meditate on the formless?'

I tell them, 'First start meditating on the form, then you can go to the formless.' Our mind is like a drunken monkey. Have you seen a monkey? It keeps jumping

from here to there. Now imagine a drunken monkey. Imagine how much it will jump! Now, added to this, imagine how it will jump if it is bitten by a scorpion!

Our mind is also like that. It is continuously jumping everywhere. In such a state, we first need a form to bring our mind to the present. A form is necessary in the initial stages for the mind to calm down. Once we master this, meditating on the formless becomes easier.

Praying or meditating on the form should actually be only a starting point. Be very clear even when we meditate on the form, we should only see the idol or form in front of us, nothing else. And we should understand that we are worshipping *through* that idol and not the idol itself.

One more thing, the basic truth in spirituality is that God is in the form of energy and He is formless. God cannot be an individual. He must be energy. Religions give shapes and forms to this divine energy. It is a good beginning, but not the end. You can start with idol worship and move into worshipping the formless energy.

Thousands of years ago, our sages clearly said in the *Upaniṣad* that everything is energy and everything arose from energy. However, only recently has science understood this truth. When Einstein proposed the theory of relativity and the mass-energy relationship, everyone in the world looked at his theory with suspicion; they could not understand it. Actually, even now only a few people understand it clearly. But at least now people have accepted his theory.

However, our sages proposed this theory thousands of years ago. When Einstein read the *Upaniṣad*, he said, 'The end of science is the beginning of spirituality.' Einstein became very spiritual towards the end of his life.

The formless God is nothing but space, ether, or energy. Now it has been proven scientifically that there is ether even in vacuum. This energy is all-pervading. It is there everywhere. We now know with the help of powerful tools that 99.99% of an atom is empty space. Continuous vibrations go on in that empty space. Only these vibrations exhibit themselves as energy. Each and every body is filled with energy. Today science says, 'Everything is filled with energy.'

Our enlightened masters expressed it this way, 'God is energy and He fills all space and is omnipresent.' Krishna says this clearly in these verses.

This energy cannot be destroyed. It can only change form. You see, when we switch on a light, electrical energy is converted into light energy. Electrical energy is not being destroyed. It has only changed form.

In the same way, universal energy is everywhere. It is in everything around us and I tell you, it is within us also. Once we realize this great truth, we see that everything around us is the same as us. Only the form in which everything exists is different. Krishna tries to explain this great truth through these verses.

When I say everything, I mean everything is Krishna, everything is *Brahman*.

Q: Swamiji, You said that we should move from the form to the formless in worship. However, some religions totally oppose this and consider form worship barbaric. Can you please explain this?

There is no doubt that all that pervades us is energy. It is absolutely true that all material objects came from that energy. This is the first statement of the first *Upaniṣad* called Isa Vasya Upanishad that says: *īśā vāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ*: from this energy all matter was created.

Yet, the same enlightened masters who told this, taught us how to worship the form through rituals and other techniques. Krishna, the greatest master of them all, identifies Himself with these techniques in these verses. Why?

From a cosmic standpoint, everything is energy. From a material standpoint, what we see and identify with is matter. Can we have sex and reproduce as energy? For argument's sake, we can talk about immaculate conception. As long as we are in the body, we need the physiological action to reproduce. If our mental state at the time of sex is such that both partners transcend the physical act and relate to one another as pure energy, immaculate conception results. That is all. Such a conception produces an enlightened being.

Anyone in the physical form, anyone in an embodied form, cannot relate with energy as such unless enlightened. We are accustomed to matter, not energy. We see matter, we feel matter and even if we have intellectual understanding that it is all energy, what we experience is matter.

To experience that all matter is energy and this energy is the same in all matter takes time to understand and accept. We need maturity for this experience. If we are forced to focus on an intangible energy form before this maturity dawns, we may accept it as a discipline or a compulsion, but not out of true understanding.

This happens in religions that deny the form as pagan, uncivilized or something else. They have an inadequate understanding of the whole concept of matter and energy, both from a scientific and spiritual point of view. Energy and matter are convertible; they can exist in both attributes in time and space. All this would have been scientifically unacceptable a century ago; but thanks to advances in quantum physics we are reaching a convergence of science and spirituality. Newtonian physics is giving way to Einsteinian physics. Material science is becoming energy science.

Hindu sages understood these truths tens of thousands of years ago. Not all religions understood or accepted this. They have been forced to accept some of these truths over time as scientific discoveries became irrefutable. Form and formless are two sides of the same experience; matter and energy are two expressions of the same reality.

The danger with religions that deny form, as if form is inferior to formless, is that they deny their own reality. If you believe that only the formless is divine, what are you then? Are you matter with no energy?

Such religions breed a deep-rooted depression within us. Simultaneously they breed hatred against those who think otherwise, whom they consider enemies. Ironically this focus on the formless instills an obsession with material things as well.

That is why such cultures and religions cannot accept rebirth and reincarnation. After all, the concept of reincarnation is based on energy and that energy is indestructible. Why then assume that we are mere matter that needs to be disposed of on the expiry date? It means that these cultures do not believe in their own energy base, in their own divinity. They see themselves as different from Nature, from Existence.

This differentiation breeds violence and terrorism. A deep-rooted inferiority complex and built-in suspicions about one's own nature instills the need to prove themselves violently against those who are centered in themselves. This is why most of the authentic religions never felt a need to propagate beliefs or proselytize. They never attempted to convert others to their religions through fear and greed.

Only those who are afraid try to convince others about how good they are. More people have been killed in the name of religion in the history of mankind than for any other reason.

Let me tell you this: There is no way that we can worship the formless directly without starting with the form. Those who believe they can, only pretend. They use gimmicks to replace the form: they use symbols; they use direction; they use pilgrimage points; they use rituals; they use all this and then believe they worship the formless. For them, the Hindu idol is a stone and is pagan worship; however if they worship another form in another name that is acceptable.

Vedic scriptural recommendations prescribe a graduated evolution. One starts with temples and rituals. One chooses one or more forms that one feels comfortable with. From physical rituals, one progresses to inner worship through sacred chants and words; then to a specific deity form; from there to meditation on the form; and finally to meditation on the formless.

The Ultimate cannot be reached in one step. We need preparation. Otherwise the dangers of being misled are real. We need to understand that when we worship the form, we worship the energy of that form through that form. Gradually we can drop that form and identify with the energy that pervades all forms.



Go To Heaven

9.20 Those who practice the vedic rituals and drink the soma juice worship Me indirectly seeking the heavenly pleasures.

They go to heaven and enjoy sensual delights.

9.21 Once they have thus enjoyed heavenly sense pleasures, they are reborn on this planet again.

By practicing vedic rituals as result-oriented actions, they are bound by the cycle of birth and death.

9.22 When you reside in My consciousness, whatever you lack I give

And whatever you have, I preserve

9.23 Even those who worship other deities, they too worship Me,

O son of Kunti, but without true understanding.

9.24 I am the only enjoyer and the only object of sacrifice.

Those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature are born again and again.

Krishna says that people who read scriptures, the *Vedas*, and who perform pious ritualistic activities based on scriptural injunctions with the aim of acquiring merits, enjoy heavenly pleasures; however they fall back into the cycle of life and death after they finish enjoying these pleasures.

You see, many people do lots of rituals. They read scriptures. Krishna says this surely helps elevate them to a higher plane of consciousness; however they are still

caught in the cycle of *saṁsāra*, birth and death. He says we should go beyond momentary pleasures that we get by reading and practicing *vedic* injunctions.

Understand these verses. By reading scriptures and performing different rituals, we will enjoy the pleasures of *Indra loka*, the heavenly pleasures; yet when the rituals are performed with that objective, we will again enter the vicious circle of birth and death.

Krishna speaks about the attitude with which we read *Vedas* and *Upaniṣads* or how we perform rituals. Scriptures have immense knowledge. Rituals have immense power. They are meditations; however they are useless if done with fear and greed.

So many people do all this in fear. They fear that if they do not perform certain rituals, they will go to hell. If they do not perform certain rites, they will not be given a place in heaven. In India, after a person dies, certain rituals are performed. People perform these rituals fearing that without these rituals the dead person will not gain a place in heaven and the living will not live in peace.

Another class of people operates with greed. They donate large sums of money thinking that the gates of heaven will be eternally open for them. Their names get carved on temple walls. They donate electric bulbs to light up temples; however half the bulb will have their name written on it. What is the use?

Please understand that when we do pious activities with fear or greed, though we see improvement, though we see some transformation, we will go back to where we started. That is what Krishna means by *Indra loka*, the momentary transformation or elevation of our state.

When we perform certain rituals, when we do *pūjā* or prayer or we read scriptures, it should become a meditation. Our ego, our fear and our greed should not come in the way. It is like this: When we perform rituals, think that this is the last time we will perform them. Do them with intensity.

The next verse is the main core that reveals the secret. Krishna tells Arjuna and all of us:

*ananyāścintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*

‘Those who always worship Me, those who always reside in Me, those who have *ananyāścinta* – means non-dual mood, means people who have become Me,

people who have experienced eternal consciousness, *ananyāscintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate*, people who have become Me, people who reside in eternal consciousness – to them, I carry what they lack and I preserve what they have. I personally take care of them.'

Please be very clear, no other incarnation has revealed this truth so clearly. He says, 'If you reside in eternal consciousness, divine energy, bliss consciousness, I take care of you in all ways.'

Yoga and *kṣema*: I give them whatever they want spiritually and materially and I take care that it stays with them. I take care that nobody takes it away from them. This is a beautiful statement and assurance.

Please understand it is not only an assurance; it is a promise. Assurance is different; promise is different. This is a promise. Krishna gives a promise, 'If you reside in My consciousness, if you reside in eternal consciousness, whatever you lack will be given and whatever you have will be preserved.'

The strange thing is that He says we will have everything and nothing will be lost. It is difficult to believe! At least for people trained in so-called present day education, it is difficult to believe! 'How can I have what I want by meditating?' This will be the immediate question.

Please be very clear, now in the modern day, especially after the breakthrough with the principles of quantum physics, science clearly proves our thoughts create the universe. Our thoughts create the whole universe.

If we reside in eternal consciousness, we create our own universe. Not only that, the universe responds to our thoughts.

A small but important experiment that I read in a magazine:

A professor did an experiment using three rose bushes. They were the same height, same kind. He kept them in three different rooms.

He entered the first room and used beautiful words, 'You are beautiful. You are nice. You are great. Don't worry, I'll protect you. Why do you need thorns?' He gave assuring and caring words. He created a loving mood.

Next he went to the room that had the second plant. He did not do much; he looked and came back: neither negative nor positive.

To the third plant, he cursed, 'What nonsense are you doing? You are ugly.' He created negative energy with his words.

He continued this experiment for twenty-one days. He studied how plants respond to thoughts as a research.

The report, the end result, is shocking. The first plant that received positive words doubled in size and had no thorns! I saw photographs of that plant. There were no thorns on that rose plant just because he gave the assurance, 'I'll protect you. Why should you protect yourself? Don't bother. There is no need for thorns.' Can you imagine a rose plant without thorns!

The second was a normal rose plant. It experienced normal growth, that's all. The plant to which he spoke neither positive nor negative words grew just as a rose plant normally would.

The third plant, to which he spoke negative words, died. Not once, but several times he repeated the same experiment in different places and in different ways. The third plant, that received negative thoughts, died all the times. He says, all the times, the plant died.

Sir Jagdish Chandra Bose, an Indian Nobel Laureate, proved that plants are alive with 'feelings'. They are capable of responding to our thoughts and emotions. This experiment proves that Existence, the outer world, responds to our thoughts.

Not only that, one more research was done. They invented a machine, like our ECG, electrocardiogram, to read the vibrations of trees, to read the vibrations of plants.

They hooked that machine up to twenty trees and observed the vibrations or pulse created by the trees. For experimental purposes, a woodcutter came inside that garden with the thought of cutting down a particular tree.

You will be surprised, he did not even go near that particular tree, yet the moment he entered the garden, that tree's graph started oscillating, started jumping. The tree panicked. The tree started suffering. The tree felt fear.

The next day, the woodcutter came into the garden with the thought of cutting down a different tree. Exactly, according to his thought, if he intended to cut tree 'x', the graph of 'x' was jumping. If he came into the garden intending to cut tree 'y', the graph of 'y' jumped.

Please be very clear: Existence responds to our thoughts.

Each of us is not an island. We are not isolated. Don't think we can think whatever we want in our inner space and that our outer life will be different. Our outer life and inner life are deeply connected.

If we live a spiritual life, we automatically attract only spiritual friends. Our outer world also becomes spiritual. All other relationships drop by themselves. We do not even feel like relating.

Many devotees tell me, ‘*Swamiji*, nowadays I am unable to go to a party. Even if I go, I have nothing to talk about. I am unable to talk about anything. What is there to talk about at a party? Same stock market or who ran away with whom, who is going with whom, who is staying with whom. Same thing. Nothing useful. Same information.’

And everybody feels that they know some secrets. They call somebody and say, ‘Don’t tell anybody. This is only for you. Do you know, a week ago, this is what happened...?’

Not only that, just telling her will not do; we must extract a promise, ‘This is a secret, it should not be told to anybody, it is only for you.’ Then after ten minutes, even the dog on the street will bark with the news!

In America of course, people don’t meet each other often; they are almost isolated and immersed in their work. In India, they cannot relax if they have information, private information about someone else. Unless it is delivered to a few hundred people, they cannot relax!

Anyhow, understand, Existence responds to our thoughts. It does not need this network. People who enter spiritual life can’t indulge in the same old talk about who is with whom, and what happened, and who ran away with whom. For all those things, they will not have time; they will not have the mood.

Only based on our thoughts, we create relationships, friends, society, our circle and naturally, our whole world.

Again and again, *Vedānta* says, *dṛṣṭi-sṛṣṭi*, we create what we see. We create the universe from the angle of our vision. When our *dṛṣṭi* (vision) changes, the *sṛṣṭi* (world around us) changes too. By changing our vision, we change the world around us. They say, we project our world and see. It is the truth.

See, whatever we place in front of a projector, whatever slide we position there, that will appear on the screen. If we place the slide of God, the picture of God appears on screen. If we place an actress, that actress appears on the screen. Whatever we use as a slide appears on the screen. The screen represents the physical planet earth. Whatever we keep in front of our consciousness, we project that in our life, our world and our experience.

The slide determines the scene on the screen. Our mentality decides the way we perceive the world, the way we experience the world. A small change in the slide changes the scene. A small change in our mind changes our whole world. The screen remains the same; the backdrop screen is same; however the scene changes.

Similarly, if the thoughts in our inner space change, the whole universe changes. The whole universe responds, the whole of Existence responds to our inner space.

Don't think that each of us is a separate island. We are part of this whole Existence. We are not alone here. If we think we are alone, we will continuously fight with Existence, with the whole universe. We will see the rest of the universe as an enemy. The part can never see the whole as enemy. We are a part. This is the Whole. If we see this as an enemy, we can never rest. Only a person who understands that the Whole is his own being, that he is part of the Whole, realizes tremendous relaxation and bliss.

Krishna says:

‘When you reside in My consciousness, whatever you lack, I give and whatever you have, I preserve.’

You may think, ‘Yes *Swamiji*, we understand when you say the universe responds to our thoughts. However, how can we get what we want?’

Please understand that the moment we change our thoughts, the moment our inner space changes, automatically we attract good things. Please be very clear, if we tune our television to BBC, we see the BBC channel. If we tune it to ABC, we see the ABC channel. If we tune it to CNN, we see the CNN channel. Similarly, if we tune our consciousness to bliss, continuously even material wealth will shower on us.

We may think, ‘How can this be possible? How can this happen? What kind of words is *Swamiji* giving?’ But I tell you, it may look difficult now. We may feel it is difficult to understand. But start experimenting. I honestly tell you, I declare from my own authority, this verse is the solid truth.

I can say this with authority because I experienced this truth for nine years. I tell you, this is a promise by the Divine. Nine years I lived in utter insecurity. I know Krishna still proves His words. His words are guaranteed. *yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*, He does!

I can quote thousands of incidents from devotees' lives, thousands of incidents! From so many devotees' lives, Tukaram, Tulsidas and so many masters' lives I can

quote to support these words. I can quote numerous incidents from my own life, from the life of people I have met.

Let me tell you a small incident that happened in my own life during my days of spiritual wandering before the incident of enlightenment.

I was staying in Hardwar at a place called Kankhal. I was doing spiritual practice. Every day morning, I went for alms to places where they feed monks. In so many ashrams, they give alms to monks. I used to get my food, eat two or three *rotis* (Indian bread) and then start meditating.

Suddenly, one day, I fell sick. I had a high temperature and diarrhea. I could not walk. I was unable to walk. I thought, 'What can be done? Alright! Let it be.'

Suddenly, a young *sanyāsi* came from nowhere and gave me food. Not only for one day but continuously for three to four days, he came; he brought food for me. Not only food, he brought medicine also. I asked him, 'Who are you? Where have you come from?' He said, 'Oh, my name is Shankar. They call me Shankar Maharaj. I stay at an ashram called Sadhana Sadan. This ashram is nearby.' He pointed towards a distant place and said that is where he stayed.

Everyday he brought me food and medicine till I recovered. He came for at least four days. Because he came everyday, I talked with him. We became acquainted.

I saw that he wore a beautiful pen with a diamond in it. It was a beautiful pen! I was surprised at how a monk got a diamond pen. I asked, 'What is this, *Swami*?'

He said, 'This is a diamond pen. Some devotee gave it to me. It looks nice, so I wear it.' Anyhow, I did not bother about it.

After several days, when I returned to normal, he stopped coming. By then, I was okay. Then I thought, 'I must go and see him. Now I can walk and move, so I should go and see him.' I felt a little connected to him because he served me. I felt I must thank him. After a week, when I became completely alright, I started walking.

I went to this ashram and asked an elderly person sitting there, '*Swamiji*, I want to see Shankar Maharaj.' The swami said, 'Shankar? Who are you talking about?' I said, 'I want to see Shankar, a young *swami*. I met him two to three days ago. He came everyday and brought me food. Is this Sadhana Sadan?'

This swami replied, 'Yes, this is Sadhana Sadan. In our ashram, there is only one Shankar. Go to the temple and see. He is the only Shankar Maharaj we have!' He pointed towards their temple.

I tell you, what I am telling is the truth. When I entered the temple, I saw a Shiva deity as a white marble statue with a cloth draped on His upper body, and wearing the same diamond pen on Him!

Of course, tears rolled down from my eyes. So much gratitude overflowed. Later, I asked the temple priest, 'How did this pen come to Shiva? Who put a pen on Shiva's statue?' He said, 'One week ago, a devotee came and offered the pen. It looked nice and he said it was a diamond pen. We just wanted to decorate Shiva with diamond jewelry. So we put the pen on Him.' It was the same pen! The very same diamond pen!

I asked, 'Who gave a pen to Shiva?' Other jewelry, we can understand, but a pen?

He replied, 'I don't know. A devotee came and offered this pen. I asked, *Why should a sanyāsi have a diamond pen? I will give it to God instead.* So I put it on Shiva. I just inserted it into Shiva's clothes.'

He then continued, 'For the last few days all the food offering, *prasād* that we place in front of Him, disappears. I suspect that rats have been eating the food. So now I am careful. I sit for a while after placing the food for Shankar Maharaj.'

I did not want to tell him that I was the rat who ate Shankar Maharaj's food!

During the 2006 Himalayan trip I searched for this ashram and Shankar Maharaj's temple with my devotees. After many years, it was still the same, the same temple and the same Shankar Maharaj; but no diamond pen now!

Of course, I do not ask you to believe the whole thing because of this one incident. But you can experiment in your life. You may say, 'This is your experience. How can this be truth for us, *Swamiji*?' An ordinary mind doubts.

Let me tell you that your consciousness, your inner space has the quality to create miracles in your lives. Miracles can happen in your life. What you need, you will receive. Continuously, miracles are happening.

Let me try to show you how miracles might have happened in your lives. You might have noticed, when the telephone rings, you suddenly remember a friend's name. When you pick up the phone, that same friend is on the line. Or at times, somebody knocks on the door. You remember some person and open the door and that very same person stands there. This is what I call the power of coincidence! These are miracles in their own way.

In each one of us, the power of coincidence, the power to create, exists. In each one of us, the power to create miracles exists. All we need to do is open that. Understand that we have the power to create the coincidence.

Trust that your consciousness is connected to the universe. Continuously, the universe cares for you. The Divine waits for you. It responds to your thoughts.

We create what we want. Just as we create the whole world in our dream, we have the power to create the world when we are conscious, when we are in the waking state. When we can create a world in the dream state, can't we create that in the waking state? We can do it.

Even now, we create our world. Next question, 'If we are creating our world, why do we create so many miseries, *Swamiji*?'

The answer is simple. We do so because we have vested interests in our sufferings.

Please be very clear. We have vested interests in our sufferings. Somewhere we feel comfortable when we suffer. So we create the whole thing.

When our inner consciousness changes, when we reside in eternal consciousness, we automatically attract the power of coincidence. We attract the power of coincidence.

The moment we understand, that the whole universe is pervaded by the Existential energy of Vishnu, we attract Lakshmi, Vishnu's Consort who represents wealth! When we understand that the whole universe is divine, when we experience Vishnu, meaning when we experience eternal bliss, we attract Lakshmi, wealth!

There is a beautiful *mantra* in Tantra shaastras: '*ānanda kāmāprānaha*' that means 'bliss attracts fortune'. When we create a blissful inner space, automatically we attract external wealth.

Tell me, what creates wealth? We need three things: clear thinking, a creative mind and the ability to make spontaneous decisions. The ability to respond

spontaneously is responsibility. The ability to respond spontaneously to any situation is responsibility. If we are able to respond spontaneously to any situation, we take that responsibility. We need clarity of thinking, creativity and the power to take responsibility. Only these three create wealth and preserve wealth.

If we enter the bliss space, if we keep our inner space blissful, if we enter into bliss consciousness, all three automatically happen to us. Automatically, these three happen to us. Then wealth will be created around us and it will stay with us.

It is not that we should be showered only by a lottery. Wealth can come simply by creating a blissful inner space and such wealth stays with us.

Please be very clear, whomsoever wins through a lottery never preserves it! I have not seen a single person who sustains the lottery money. Without knowing the value of it, they simply blow it away.

Be very clear, it is not that wealth should come only by lottery. It comes by intelligence. When it comes by intelligence, it stays with you. When we take care of our inner space, automatically, the outer space showers on us. We becoming a blessing for planet Earth and it showers on us.

Existence responds to our inner bliss and blesses us. Never think that Existence is not alive. Never think that the universe is mere matter. It is live intelligence.

People ask me, '*Swamiji*, I am searching for a guru. I feel inspired to do spiritual practice. But I need a guru.'

I tell them, 'Please be very clear, if your search is intense, God sends you the guru. He never misses His responsibility. If you do not have the right guru, if you do not have the right master, it means, please be very clear, something is seriously wrong with your seeking.'

If our seeking is proper, straightaway the master happens in our life. He never delays. He has a much faster system than UPS or any other overnight delivery service. He can deliver in seconds. He never delays. The Divine never delays. Jesus never fails.

Please be very clear, all we need to do is change our inner space. The first thing is to understand this secret. Whether we believe it or not, it is the truth: a basic secret. Once we enter spiritual life, once we decide we want to lead a spiritual life, all our worldly things are taken care of by the Divine.

It responds to whatever we need and it takes care of whatever we have. We may ask funny questions, 'Swamiji, from today onwards if I stop working, will I have everything?'

Be very clear, if we enter the spiritual mood, if we enter spiritual life, meditative life, we will never think of dropping our work. Why would we think of dropping our work? We will only drop our *worries* about work. Then we will work in a much better way. Automatically we will work in a better way. We will have tremendous confidence, 'The whole of Existence protects me. The whole of Existence is my friend. I am not an enemy of this Whole. I am a friend of this Whole.'

Be very clear, when we understand that we are a friend of the whole of Existence, even after death we will not disappear because we know we will be there in the universe in some form; that there is nothing to worry about.

Plato, a disciple of Socrates, recorded the conversations of Socrates. All of you must read the conversations between Plato and Socrates. They asked Socrates, 'Are you not afraid of death?'

Socrates says, 'Only two things can happen. The first thing: I will be alive after I leave the body in some form, in some way, somewhere. In that case, why should I be afraid? I will be alive anyway. The second thing: I may not exist. I may completely disappear. Then there will anyway be no one left to feel fear! Either I will exist or I will not exist. If I exist, why should I fear? I am going to exist after all, exist in some other form, in some other name, somewhere. If I am not going to exist, then who is there to suffer? Either way there is no need for fear.'

Of course, this answer is logical. But I tell you this from experience: It is practical. From experience I tell you, we never perish. We continue to exist, in some form, somewhere. Even if we become enlightened, we become a pure conscious energy. We will be there, everywhere. We never die when we understand that Existence is intelligence.

Q: Swamiji, why are there so many rituals? Why do people do rituals in the first place? Are they in any way related to spirituality?

Let me tell you something. Do not think people who do rituals are not following a spiritual path. Please be very clear, people who read *vedic* scriptures or who do rituals are also on the spiritual path. However, they must be very clear about what they are doing. They should know what that particular ritual is, why that ritual? They should clearly understand them.

In ancient times, masters used meditation techniques to feel the connection with the Divine within. In the course of time, the meaning of these meditation techniques was lost. When the meditation method, the physical action, without the idea or philosophy behind the meditation technique was transmitted, those meditation techniques became rituals. When a ritual is conducted with full understanding and consciousness, that ritual becomes a meditation technique. There is no difference between a meditation technique and a ritual when done with full understanding and consciousness. Both techniques directly put you in tune with the ultimate energy.

We are made of five elements – ether, air, fire, water and earth. Sages created different meditation techniques that help us connect to these five elements. When we pray to an idol with full awareness, we are supposed to connect to the earth element. All solid things that we see are the earth element. We connect to the earth element through idol worship. When we bathe in the holy rivers, we connect with the water element. When we do fire rituals, we connect with the fire element. When we chant sacred verses, we connect to the air element, and when we meditate, we connect to ether element.

But what has happened today? They have become mere rituals. They were supposed to be meditation techniques for the Self to connect with Existence. Now they are done blindly. The intellectual mind sees them as religious. People call them superstitious.

People ask me, 'Why do you worship idols? Why do you conduct so many fire rituals?' We question this way because we do not have a clear understanding of these meditation techniques. That is why we call them rituals.



Life After Life

9.25 Those who worship the deities will take birth among the deities; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; those who worship ancestors go to the ancestors

Those who worship Me will live with Me.

9.26 Whoever offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept and consume what is offered by the pure-hearted.

9.27 O son of Kunti, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, as well as all austerities that you may perform,

Give them as an offering to Me.

9.28 You will be freed from all reactions to good and evil deeds by this renunciation,

You will be liberated and come to Me.

We should study and understand these verses very deeply. Krishna talks about the life that we lead now. He talks about the birth that we will take next. Please understand that our present life is a result of our previous life. Whether we believe it or not, accept it or not, this is the truth. There is life after death as long as we are not enlightened.

Once we are enlightened, we merge into universal consciousness. Until then we take birth and go through the process of life and death.

Krishna talks about the kind of life that we lead now. The last thought that we have at the time of death determines our next birth, next life. Please understand,

our next life is completely dependent upon our last thought at the time of our death. If we think of money, we will be reborn as a rich man or as a dissatisfied man who always thinks about money. If we think of food, we will be reborn as a glutton or a pig. If we think of lazily relaxing, we will be reborn as a buffalo.

This is the truth. Our last thought determines our first thought in our next life. Actually we need not go to the extent of life and death. We see this in daily life itself. Our last thought affects our first thought. Every night we die and every morning we take birth. During the day, when we are in the waking state, we use our gross physical body or *sthūla śarīra* to carry on with our activities. When we sleep, if we have dreams, we use the subtle body or *sūkṣma śarīra* to travel to the places that we see in our dreams. When we are in deep sleep, when we have no dreams, then we are in our causal body or *kāraṇa śarīra*.

When we sleep at night, we actually change bodies. We are not aware that this happens. When we dream, we see ourselves doing various things in the dream. We run, talk, eat, and do everything in the dream. In our dream, we have created a world in which we live. If our body is on the bed, then who is this body in the dream? Our gross body is on the bed, while our subtle body is active in the dream. In the same way, the causal body is active during the deep sleep state.

Now, when we sleep, we actually die and are reborn in the gross body in the morning. We see that our last thought before sleeping affects our first thought upon waking. If we come back from the office with a frustrated mood about our boss, we wake up with the same mood in the morning. If we sleep with a blissful smile on our face, we will be happy the next morning.

This is the reason we are asked to pray before we sleep at night. When we pray with full awareness, we enter a meditative state. In the meditative state, we can only be blissful. When we sleep in a blissful state, we wake up in the same state.

One more thing you need to know is that whatever feeling we wake up with in the morning, that same feeling stays with us throughout the day. Be very clear, the first thought we have in the morning stays with us throughout the day. How many have felt this? If you wake up dull in the morning, you will be dull throughout the day. If you wake up energized, you will be active and energetic throughout the day.

I tell people, 'When you wake up, dance your way to the bathroom! Feel the toothpaste on your teeth, feel the water on your body when you bathe. Bring in full awareness to every action. Start the day with a blissful thought. For that we must sleep also in a blissful mood.'

Exactly what happens everyday during sleep is exactly the same thing that happens during the time of death. Ramakrishna says beautifully: When we die and take the next birth, the soul just changes clothes. During death, the soul sheds the cloth and in the next birth, it puts on a new cloth.

Be very clear, the process of sleep and the process of death are not different. During the process of death, the soul passes through seven energy layers. The next body it enters depends on the *vasana*, or the carried-over desires that it comes with from the previous life. It takes up a body that can help shed that *vāsana* in the next life.

Please understand this very clearly. The body that we take now is dependent on the *vāsana* or carried-over desires of our previous birth. Our soul always tries to merge with the colorless and formless universal consciousness. However, the *vāsana* creates a slight tinge on the soul and it cannot completely merge with the universal consciousness. So the soul takes up another body that can help remove this tinge and help it merge.

Now it is up to us how we make use of this lifetime. We can either fulfill our unfulfilled desires of the previous life or we can build new desires in this life and stay in the cycle of birth and death. The kind of life that the soul chooses in the next life depends entirely on the *vāsana* and the last thought at the time of death.

People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, I was not inclined towards spirituality at all. I was not into meditation; however, when I did the meditation I felt like I had been doing this for a long time. What is it? Why is it like that?’

Understand that you see only this life. You may not have done any meditation in this life. But you see a deep connection with meditation because you might have meditated in your previous life. You might have been a seeker in your previous life.

A small story:

In a forest a person meditated very deeply in front of goddess Kali. He performed different rituals in a deep meditative state. He meditated for long hours in the dense forest.

One day a passer-by observed this man performing rituals and meditating in front of Kali. Suddenly, a tiger attacked and ate the man. After the tiger disappeared into the forest, the passer-by approached the Kali idol and completed the ritual. At the end of it, to his surprise, goddess Kali appeared in front of him.

This man was shocked. He asked Kali, 'Mother, the person who performed the rituals for such a long time never received Your *darśan*; You never appeared before him. He was even eaten by a tiger. I only came a few minutes ago and did the final waving of lit lamps, and You appeared in front of me! What is the reason?'

Kali says, 'You were a strong seeker in your previous life. You meditated very deeply in your last life. That is why I appeared to you.'

You see, our next life depends on our last thought in this life. That does not mean that throughout our life we can think about money and food and suddenly at the time of death, we can say, 'Rama, Krishna.' If we think about money, name and fame throughout our entire life, how can we expect to think about God when we leave our body? Naturally we will only think about money.

This is what Krishna says in the first verse. When we are continuously aware of the Existential energy, when we continuously meditate on It, when our thoughts are on it all the time, whatever we may call it: Krishna, Rama, Jesus, Buddha, universe, Cosmos, *Parāśakti* or anything, we will have only the same thought when we leave the body also. That is enough. We will start living with this energy. And It will ensure that our next birth takes us closer to this energy and liberates us from the cycle of birth and death.

He says next:

patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati

'If one offers Me with love and devotion, a leaf, flower, fruit or water, I will accept it,' He says, 'The Existence, the Divine is so alive that It responds to even simple things.'

Please be very clear, He doesn't say, I accept only big things. He says, even simple things, I accept.

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tadahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtaṁ aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

'If one offers Me a leaf, flower, fruit or water with love and devotion, I will accept it.' This is the greatness of the Divine. The greatness of the Lord is that He is simple. Simplicity is the greatness of the Lord. Please be very clear, simplicity is the real greatness. To be big, you don't need intelligence. Any one can show himself as big.

There is a small beautiful saying in Zen:

A Zen disciple was behaving very humbly, respecting everybody. The master told him, 'Don't be so humble, you are not that great!'

To be humble, you need to be great!

Simplicity is the great quality of the Divine. He says, '*patraṁ, puṣpaṁ, phalaṁ, toyaṁ*. Just a leaf, a flower, a fruit, a little water... simple things are enough. I accept it. I am pleased. I respond to it.'

He says in the fourth verse of this chapter:

mayā tatam idam sarvaṁ jagadvyaktaṁ mūrtinā

'I am all-pervading, great, ultimate, divine.'

Now He says even though He is all-pervading, even though He is big, He accepts any small thing given with love and devotion.

One major problem: Even if we know somebody is big or great, we can't relate with him unless he relates with us, unless he comes down to our level.

Real greatness is not only being great. He must be able to relate with everybody. Otherwise, even if he is great, what can be done about it?

Many people in India know that great masters are there. Again and again, they tell me, 'Yes I know they are there, *Swamiji*. But how can I relate with them? I have no use of them. I can't do anything. I can't relate with them. They are somewhere. They are great, no doubt. Yet I have no way to relate with them. I have no way to establish communication with them.'

Here Krishna creates a way, even for ordinary people to relate with Him. On the one side, He shows His greatness. He declares with authority His greatness. On the other side, He shows us how to relate with Him. He says, 'Even if you offer a leaf, flower, fruit or water with love, I accept it. I relate with it.'

That is why, from time immemorial, enlightened masters are requested to live by begging, so that people can relate with them. In India, *sanyāsis* live by begging. Even Buddha lived by begging. See, Buddha didn't beg because He wanted food. He can sit in His place and kings will bring food for Him! He comes down to beg so that we can relate with Him. We will feel He is a human being. When we give food, we talk to Him, we relate with Him, we feel that He is like us.

To make us feel comfortable, He comes down to our level. Modern day psychology has a beautiful term, 'zeroing down the distance'. Zeroing down the distance! To zero down the distance, Buddha begs. Here Krishna zeroes down the distance completely. This verse zeroes down the distance between the Divine and us:

*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyamīyo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tadahaṁ bhaktyupahṛtaṁ aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ*

'If you give even a simple leaf, flower, fruit or a little water with love, I accept it.'

The distance between the Divine and us is zeroed down. That is the next important truth Krishna reveals.

First thing Krishna reveals is: He proves that the whole cosmic energy, the whole universe is intelligence. Next, the moment we understand it is intelligence, we relax from all tension, worry, fear and insecurity. He makes us understand that He is next to us and we can relate with Him easily.

See, as long as we think the world is material, matter, we feel like protecting ourselves from it. We feel that is the Whole and we are part. We fight with the Whole. That is why we feel deeply uprooted. We don't feel connected. We don't feel like relaxing. We don't feel homely because we fight with the Whole.

The moment we understand we are part of the Whole, the Whole is the intelligence that responds to our thoughts, which responds to our being, which responds to our consciousness, we relax into enlightenment!

I tell people, this verse is the lazy man's guide to enlightenment! If we are lazy, if we want enlightenment, this verse is the right way! The only way!

Understand that the universe is intelligence. It responds to our thoughts, deeds and consciousness. When we understand this, we immediately relax and rest and enter divine consciousness, eternal consciousness.

Next, He says, 'When you drop yourself into the eternal consciousness, I take care of your *yoga* and *kṣema*. I take care of whatever you lack. I will supply what you lack and preserve what you have.'

Next He says, 'Even a simple leaf, water or a fruit or flower when you offer with love and devotion, I accept it.' Please be very clear, He is not asking because He doesn't have these things.

When we bring a package of cookies to our child, when we give it to the child and he opens it, we say, 'Give one to mummy!' It is not that we don't have a cookie or we want it. But if the child opens the package and picks up a cookie and gives it to us, how happy we feel! We brought the cookies. However, when the child gives it back to us, we feel beautiful. We feel connected. And we know he wants to connect to us; he wants to relate with us.

Similarly, when we offer something to the Divine, don't think that He does not have and so you are offering. He is the one who gives everything to us in the first place! But when we offer, we show to the Divine: I want to connect to you. We show the master, 'Oh Lord, I want to connect to you.' And the master feels, 'When he wants to connect to Me, let Me connect to him.' We show a green signal for the Divine to enter into our space.

He is always ready. Please be very clear, the Bible says, 'Knock and the door shall open.' I say, God is knocking, just open! *We* don't need to knock; *He* is knocking. Just open. Naturally we will be ushered in.

I tell people, 'Don't go to the temple empty-handed. Take at least two or three fruits or whatever you have. At least, take a few dollars. Take whatever you have. Always offer something to God. Always offer something to the Divine. Never think that the Divine doesn't have and so I am asking you to take these things. By giving to the Divine, you show a positive sign. You express a willing attitude to relate with Him. When you offer it to the Divine, He accepts it and He relates.'

Again and again, out of His compassion Krishna reveals truths and techniques to Arjuna. He gives different techniques to Arjuna to liberate himself. That is the job of an enlightened master. He comes down to the earth to liberate as many as He can. There are many scriptures in which enlightened masters speak on techniques that lead mankind to enlightenment. In the Shiva Sutras, Shiva gives one hundred and twelve great truths and techniques to enlighten us. Enlightened masters are compassionate. They want everyone to become enlightened. They want everyone to become liberated.

In these verses, Krishna asks Arjuna to surrender everything to Him. I tell you, surrendering to an enlightened master is the easiest way to become enlightened. Be very clear, if we can surrender completely to the universal energy or an enlightened master, we become enlightened. If we can surrender every action to the supreme Self, we experience a great sense of liberation.

We constantly worry. We are always tense. Again and again we think of the future or past. Why do we do that? Why do we always have a long face?

We take too much on our shoulders. We think we do everything. We boost our ego when we do things successfully. When they do not go according to our plan, our ego is hurt. We think, 'How can it be? How can I go wrong? How can my plan go wrong?'

Our ego is working continuously. It is either getting excited or getting hurt. In this process, what do we do? We think, 'How can I keep the ego continuously excited or how can I stop the ego from getting hurt?' Can you understand what I am saying? We again and again think of ways to keep our ego in the excited state or look for ways to stop our ego from getting hurt.

We do not understand that by letting go, by surrendering to the Existential energy, we will be free. We will be completely free. All our burdens will be gone. We do not realize this. All enlightened masters have spoken about surrender. It is the easiest way; however we make it the most difficult due to our ego.

There are three levels in which we can surrender to the Existential energy. The first level, or basic level of surrender, is that of our actions. Whatever we do, whatever our actions are, surrender them to the universal energy. All our actions, whether good or bad, when we surrender, will be taken care of. This is the basic level. Krishna clearly says this in these verses, 'All your reactions to good and evil will be taken care of, if you offer all your actions, all your austerities to me.'

So many people offer worship every day in the temple. If they do that with the ego that they are doing it, then all they do is chant some verses mechanically and throw some flowers on the deity, that's all. These temple priests simply vomit out whatever they have been chanting for the past ten or twenty years.

When worship is done, when you chant verses, do it with full surrender to the Divine. Do it as if it were your last prayer. Do it as if the world is coming to an end and this is the last time you will do it. Feel the prayer. Put in your complete awareness and surrender it to the Divine. That should be the feeling when you do anything.

Not just prayers, everything that we do should be done with that level of surrender. When we surrender, we feel light. You see, when we surrender, our efficiency goes up. This is true! When we surrender our actions, we are not bothered about what will happen in the future. We know that now the ball is in His court; He will take care of whatever is going to happen; He knows best.

When we surrender our actions, we put our entire burden on His shoulders. Whatever good or bad happens, He is now responsible and we also know that He can never do anything wrong.

The second level of surrender is that of intellect and mind. The first level is easier compared to this. When I say surrender our actions, we can say, 'Okay, I have done it.' But surrendering our mind is more difficult because it is not in our hands. You see, we can see our actions. We can say, 'O God, I have surrendered my actions to you.' But now will our mind keep quiet? No. It will keep saying, 'No, no, no. How can you do that? How can you not think about your future?' Our mind continuously analyzes!

One more thing, when I speak great truths, your mind analyzes them. It starts to analyze using its limited intellect. It thinks, 'What is He saying? How is that possible? Maybe it is possible for Him; however it is not for me. I can't think of completely surrendering myself to the Divine.' Your mind always looks for opportunities to hold you back. It again and again logically analyzes using the intelligence it has.

You see, hundreds of years ago when someone said that the earth rotates around the sun, people stoned that person. Now it has been established scientifically itself. Two hundred years ago, if someone said you can talk to someone living on the other side of the world, people would laugh at him. Now it has become a reality.

Our mind, based on its limited intellect, cannot comprehend certain things. When I say there are eleven dimensions in our system, you think, 'What are you saying, *Swamiji*? How is it possible?' This is what I mean by surrender of mind and intellect. When you surrender your mind and intellect to the universal energy, you experience great truths. When you do not surrender, you are stuck. Your intellect continuously stops you from moving forward. Once you surrender, you experiment and you see quantum progress. You go beyond words. You start to experience.

The third and the most difficult level of surrender is that of the senses.

A story from Mahabharata illustrates this:

Once, Krishna and Arjuna were walking outdoors. While they walked, Krishna suddenly pointed at a crow on the tree and told Arjuna, 'Hey Arjuna, can you see that green crow?' Arjuna replied, 'Yes Krishna, I see it. I see the green crow.'

After some time, Krishna pointed to another crow and said, 'Arjuna, can you see that black crow?' Arjuna immediately replied, 'Yes Krishna, I see the black crow.'

Krishna asked Arjuna, 'Are you a fool? Earlier when I showed a green crow, you said you can see a green crow. Now when I showed a black crow, you say you can see a black crow. Are you a fool? How can a crow be green?'

Arjuna replied, 'O Krishna, I don't know all that. When you asked me to see a green crow, I saw a green crow. Now when you asked me to see a black crow, I saw a black crow.'

This is surrender of the senses! Arjuna had surrendered completely to Krishna. Even his senses, he had surrendered to Krishna. If the master says something, the disciple takes it as it is. That is the level of surrender. When we reach this level of surrender, we are one with the Divine. The Divine takes care of us.

Krishna says this clearly. Every enlightened master makes this promise. When we surrender ourselves to the master, to the Divine, to the universal energy, it takes care of us. When we offer all our actions to the universal energy, It takes care of us. The entire burden on our shoulders is offloaded. We are free from all the results of our actions. This is the promise of every enlightened master.

Q: Swamiji, I am unclear even after you explained, the purpose of rituals. We see so many things happening in a temple. So many pūjās and prayer rituals are done in a temple. Even in the home, people do puja. What is the need to do so many things? I can pray to Existence directly. Why are we doing so many things? What is the concept of pūjā?

Be very clear, there is great power in pūjā. Logical people call it superstition. They say it is not for modern man because they do not know what it does. Pūjā is receiving the guest (God) with all respect. Actually, what priests do in the temple is receiving the guest (God) with all respect. When a guest visits our home, we receive that person with respect: we offer a chair, give water to wash his feet or hands. We offer a seat.

Then we ask him, 'Do you want to use the restroom?' We offer water to wash his feet. We offer flowers to the guest. After the flowers have been offered, we arrange for his bath and comfortable stay. Then naturally we ask him to eat. Then in the end, at the end of the day we send the guest to sleep. The same thing happens when we do pūjā. This is the reason why pūjā in Hindu system is called sevā (service).

We need to understand the concept of serving. It is difficult for logic-centered people to understand that energy can be alive in a stone and we can continuously serve that energy day in and day out. Serving living energy inside an idol is difficult to understand. However I have seen people feel the devotional service, not only feeling but also expressing that devotional feeling towards stone deities at the time of worship.

Let me tell you a story from Ramakrishna Paramahansa's life. It is not a story. It really happened. It shows the power of worship and devotion.

Ramakrishna was a priest in the Mother Kali temple at Dakshineshwar, near Kolkata, India. Devotees habitually offer conch and seashell bracelets to the Mother. Once a devotee brought four bracelets as an offering for Mother. She has four hands: on the right side, one hand represents the posture of assurance and the other hand represents boon-giving. On the left side She holds a sword which represents wisdom, in one hand and the head of a demon that represents the ego, in the other hand. The sword is removable.

Ramakrishna while offering the bracelets managed to put on the bracelets in the three hands of Mother but not on the fourth hand that held the demon's head. Because the bracelet can't go on that hand, he didn't put the bracelet on.

A priest jokingly asked Ramakrishna why he was unable to put the bracelet on Mother's fourth hand. Ramakrishna said that the hand holds the head. The priest said, 'You are a great devotee, can't you request Mother to open leave the head down while you can insert the bracelet?'

Ramakrishna took this seriously and he asked Mother Kali to let him put the bracelet on. She dropped the head; he placed the bracelet on Her hand and he gave the head back to the Mother's hand to hold!

You can see these four bangles at the Dakshineshwar temple even today. Neither the statue is broken nor is the bracelet broken. The bracelet is on Mother's hand. You will be surprised to see how it was put on!

Of course, one can only believe and respect the devotion of Ramakrishna to Kali. If you go to Kolkata, don't miss seeing it. When I went to the temple, I was in their ashram, so I went as an *ashramite*. So I was allowed to touch the bracelet and see. Not only did I touch the bracelet, I rotated the bracelet completely to see whether it was broken at any point. I inspected it to see whether Ramakrishna had broken the bracelet and glued it!

I tell you, the bracelet is complete; it is not broken and the statue also is full. It is difficult to believe and it is not a 300 or 400-year-old incident. It happened only 130 years ago. In 1886, Ramakrishna passed away, so it is only 130 years. There is no logical explanation to this, yet it is true. The power of devotion can manifest itself in the physical plane in such ways.

That is the power of devoted worship. When we offer worship, we offer ourselves to the energy behind the idol. We surrender ourselves to Existence. That should be the feeling with which we offer it. We should not be stuck at the idol level. We should see the energy behind the idol. All rituals should be done like a meditation. We should put complete awareness into performing them. Only then they become meditation and not just rituals.



Anyone Can Reach Me

9.29 I dislike no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all.

Whoever is devoted to Me is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him.

9.30 Even if the most sinful person engages himself in devotional service,

He is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated.

9.31 He quickly becomes righteous and attains lasting peace.

O son of Kunti, declare it boldly that My devotee never perishes.

9.32 O son of Pritha, anyone who takes shelter in Me,

Women, traders, workers or even sinners can approach the supreme destination.

9.33 How much easier then it is for the learned, the righteous, the devotees and saintly kings

Who in this temporary miserable world engage in loving service unto Me.

9.34 Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and bow down to Me.

Thus, uniting yourself with Me by setting Me as the supreme goal and the sole refuge, you shall certainly come to Me.

An enlightened master wants nothing from this world. After realizing the supreme knowledge, he is beyond material pursuits, what can he want from anybody? He is here out of his compassion to awaken mankind into this reality.

As long as a devotee does not understand that there can be no vested interest in what a master says or does, he continuously creates doubts and suffering for

himself. Until he understands that a master gives because that is his nature, that he overflows with that knowledge and is compassionate to share that knowledge with anyone, the devotee will always think twice before following the master.

Please understand that a true master is never envious of anybody. He knows that the entire universe is His, so where is the need to envy somebody else? See, when does envy come in? It enters us when we think that somebody else has something we do not have and something that we want.

There is nothing wrong with desiring something because we need it. Problems start when we want something because somebody else has it or wants it. See, each one of us is born with a certain set of desires and we bring with us the energy to fulfill them also.

Ramana Maharshi says beautifully, 'The universe has enough to satisfy each man's needs; however it does not have enough to satisfy a single man's wants.' Our needs become wants when we look at others and accumulate their desires into our own list.

I always say, 'The temperature in our home suddenly goes up when our neighbor gets an air-conditioner!'

If you notice in life, most of our actions are governed by comparing our lives with others. Buddha says, 'Nothing exists but in relationship.' See, all adjectives of good, bad, tall, thin, ugly, beautiful, come when you compare with others, right? Imagine you are alone on an island and there are no other human beings. You are by yourself. Would these adjectives make sense or have relevance to you?

Something is good because something else is bad in comparison to that. So, our lives are run by constant comparison with those around us. Naturally, when someone has something that we like and which we do not have, emotions like envy and jealousy are bound to come. They have to.

When we have a clear view about what we really want, then we will spend all our energies in fulfilling those needs, without worrying about what others want or think.

In this verse, Krishna says that he does not dislike anybody. He also says that He is not partial to anyone. Normally, in our lives we are partial to those who are helpful to us. From childhood, we are taught to love those who are potentially useful in our lives. We make friends based on what we get back in return.

Everything has been reduced to a business transaction. If someone is nice to us, we are nice to them. If someone says something that hurts us, they become our enemies. We are vulnerable to the outside world, to what others say and do. We place people on different pedestals depending on how they behave with us.

As long as we are beggars, we differentiate a rich man from a poor man. A beggar is constantly seeking, begging. So he looks up to somebody who has what he is begging for. A beggar is on the road begging money; we are in temples begging God for something or the other. There is no real difference! We constantly ask for something. When we beg, a person who gives what we are begging for goes on our good list. A person who does not is blacklisted. This is what we do all the time, with or without our knowledge.

An enlightened master wants nothing. He gives constantly. So this is an entirely different ball game. He radiates love because that is his true nature. He does not care who receives it; he simply gives. A river flows happily from one region to the other all the way from the hills to the ocean. It meets various kinds of stones and grass along the way. All kinds of people bathe in it; even buffaloes bathe in it. Does the river differentiate?

Does the river say, 'No, I will give water only to such and such a person?' No! A river flows continuously, happily without bothering about who comes in contact with it. The same is the case with an enlightened master.

It is possible for everyone to live this way. If we understand that the universe showers on us all that we need, we do not need to beg for anything from anybody. We will constantly utter words of love and emit loving energy around us irrespective of who is with us. We become a source of positive energy wherever we go. It is giving without asking.

Now Krishna says, 'If one is engaged in devotional service, then even if he commits the most abominable actions, he is considered saintly. He quickly becomes eternal and attains eternal consciousness. O Kaunteya, son of Kunti, declare it boldly, that My devotee never perishes.' He goes on to say that His devotee never perishes.

He says, 'Not only I am declaring to you, you declare to the whole world, My devotee never perishes.'

He says in the verse:

*kṣīpraṁ bhavati dharmātmā śaśvacchāntiṁ nigacchati
kaunteya pratijānāhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati*

‘He who quickly becomes righteous and understands this truth, enters into eternal bliss, eternal consciousness, O son of Kunti, Kaunteya; declare it boldly, *pratijānīhi* means ‘declare it boldly’, that my devotee never perishes.’

Understand again and again that Existence is intelligence. Please be very clear, you will never perish, you will never die because you will be in Existence somewhere in some form. This body may move; however *you* will be there forever.

When we understand the whole cosmos is intelligence, the whole cosmic energy is intelligence, our whole life will be blessed with what we want. Whatever we lack will be supplied and whatever we have will be preserved.

And I tell you a practical thing. Decide, ‘From today I will live in a blissful mood, in a blissful way, in utterly relaxed consciousness.’ I promise you will attract Lakshmi (goddess of wealth). You will attract wealth. You will create much more than a goldsmith.

When we really, intensely understand this truth – the whole universe is energy, the whole Existence is energy – please be very clear, yoga and *kṣema* (success) happen in our life.

Let me tell you from my personal experience. I can quote so many great devotees’ lives, where the Divine came down and served them, where the Divine took care of them. When Mirabai was poisoned, Sri Krishna came and protected her. So many millions of stories I can narrate!

But let me tell you about my own life. Since I left home when I was seventeen I have lived without touching money. With one water pot, with this two-piece robe, walking the length and breadth of India, living under trees, begging and eating, I have lived. I tell you, whether you want it or not, accept it or not, believe it or not, the Divine always protects. This is the solid truth.

When we understand this truth, not only in this world, wherever we go, we are protected. We relax into the consciousness that Existence continuously protects us, takes care of us.

When we think that the Whole is our enemy, we will be continuously antagonizing it. When we understand that the Whole is our friend, we will relax and enjoy the whole of Existence.

Making our life into hell or heaven is dependent upon the understanding this single verse, understanding Existence and trusting it.

The whole chapter reveals this single secret, that is, the cosmic energy, the whole universe is intelligence, It responds to our thoughts, and again and again, It answers our dreams, our thoughts and our very consciousness.

Again and again Krishna talks about the correct understanding of rituals and sacrifices made in front of God. So many people go to the temple and make different kinds of sacrifices. We should first understand the deeper meaning of these sacrifices.

We see numerous people going to the temple. They take one hundred and one coconuts and break them in front of the deity. In the Tirupati temple of Lord Venkateshwara, people offer their hair as a sacrifice. We should understand the meaning of this hair sacrifice. If we offer hair and pray and come back home, nothing is going to happen.

When we offer something, when we sacrifice something, it represents the surrender of our ego. When we sacrifice our hair in Tirupati, we surrender our ego to Lord Venkateshwara. When we break a coconut, the shell of the ego is broken into pieces.

However what generally happens? When we do some sacrifice, we proudly tell people that we did this and we did that. Nowadays if we come back from Tirupati with a bald, shaved head people say, 'Oh he went to Tirupati and his devotion is so much that he tonsured his head.' When people say this, our ego gets boosted. When we do such sacrifices, we think we did something great. All the sacrifices that we make are only to boost our ego.

So many people donate large amounts of money to temples. They donate chairs, curtains in the sanctum sanctorum, lamps and lots of things. Whatever they donate have their names painted on it! The curtains in the sanctum sanctorum have their names stitched on them. So many temples have marble slabs with the donor's name and their donation amount engraved on them. What is the point of giving if all we look for is advertising ourselves?

If a sacrifice is made with complete gratitude and surrender, it is fine. When it is made out of ego, there is no use. When it is made out of greed, it is useless. They think if their name is engraved on the temple walls, they will go to heaven.

I take a group of people to the Himalayas every year. We meet priests in the temples there who say, 'If you offer a cow to Shiva, you will go to heaven.' For that offering, the priest charges lots of money. When we go the next year, we see

the same cow being offered again! Understand how many times the same cow is offered to Shiva and how much money this person makes out of it.

Sacrificing in temples has become a business today. It is a two-way business. People who act out of ego make a business deal with God, 'I will donate so much money for the temple; leave one spot for me in heaven.' That is the way sacrifice is done in temples. Another class of people sits outside the temple and makes money from sacrifices. They say that they will make sure that the donor will be given a red carpet welcome at the gates of heaven if he or she makes a donation.

One more thing, every temple has numerous gods and demigods. People make sacrifices to a particular demigod. It is okay to do some sacrifice to that particular demigod; however we should understand that it is not just one demigod that we are praying to. We should understand the energy behind that demigod that pervades everything. We should understand that everything has the same existential energy. Once we get this understanding correct, whatever sacrifice we make, to whichever demigod we make the sacrifice, we know that we are sacrificing to the ultimate energy.

People ask me, 'Are sacrifices wrong? Is worship and sacrifice for a particular deity wrong?' No, it is not wrong; however we should understand that we are not worshipping or sacrificing to that one particular deity. We must go beyond that. When we make a sacrifice from our being, we merge with the Existential energy. We do not see a difference between one deity and the other. Every deity will then appear the same.

We will see that everything is Krishna or Rama or Jesus or Buddha. This is what Krishna says here. He is the only enjoyer of all sacrifices. When we understand His transcendental nature in everything around us, any small thing that we give from our whole being to even a rock becomes a sacrifice. That rock need not be carved into a statue of Krishna or Shiva. We need not name it because we see the energy behind that rock.

These two verses must be carefully understood. If not, they can be conveniently used as a justification to do whatever one wants. See, Krishna does not give a license to do whatever we want here.

If we are classifying an action as good, bad, saintly or sinful based on guidelines laid down by society or someone else, then be very clear we operate at the conscience level. No action is good or bad in itself. The entire situation should be

considered. The act may remain the same; however, the situation might have completely changed.

A small story:

There was a snake that lived in a village. It bit the villagers even if they didn't disturb it. Nobody dared to go close to it. The entire area where it used to stay was feared. Nobody entered that area.

One day a monk passed by that village and saw that the villagers did not approach that area. On enquiring, he understood the situation. He asked the snake, 'Why do you bite everyone? What do you gain from being so violent? Everyone fears you!'

On listening to the monk's words, the snake promised he would mend his ways from that day onwards.

Days passed by. Slowly, there was a change in the scene in the village. The snake stopped bothering everyone. It lay quietly in one place. People started to test it by poking it with a stick to confirm that the snake had really softened up. The snake never reacted.

They now started torturing the snake. Kids from the nearby village threw stones at it. They ill-treated the snake and played with it. The snake quietly allowed all of this without uttering a word.

Soon, the snake was reduced to almost a pulp and lost all life and vigor.

After a few months, the monk once again passed by that village. He was shocked to see the condition of the snake. He enquired what happened and the snake told him all that had happened.

The monk asked, 'I told you only not to bite; did I tell you not to hiss?'

You see, this is what happens when we operate from our conscience. Because somebody said something, if we apply it blindly without considering the present situation. We invite trouble for ourselves. In this case, the monk's advice was taken literally and the snake ended up suffering.

There is a deeper layer of operation called consciousness. Please understand that conscience is different from consciousness. In consciousness, we become spontaneous. When consciousness flowers, we know what needs to be done and what is right at that point in time. When this happens, whatever is done is for the good of

everyone. Even if an action seems to violate the norms of society, it is always for the good. It may not be evident to society; however a person operating from consciousness can never do anything against the benefit of humanity. Krishna killing demons may appear like the act of a criminal. Yet He established truthfulness and justice by doing it.

In fact, Jesus said the same thing: one who is in Christ consciousness, whatever he does will be fine. He will be protected. Jesus was talking about consciousness; however society interpreted it at the conscience level. That is why the Church came up with the system of confession. People interpreted it as a license to do whatever they wanted, since confession would make them free.

Please understand that when devotion matures, consciousness flowers. Devotion may seem different from knowledge when it is not ripe. Krishna says that His devotee never perishes. Devotion is not simply offering worship daily to Krishna's photo, lighting camphor, lamps and offering garlands. When one is a true devotee of Krishna, he becomes Krishna. He experiences Krishna consciousness. The ultimate consciousness is where no good, bad, evil or virtue exists.

Devotion, knowledge and wisdom appear to be different when they are not ripe. When they mature, they become the same. One experiences true wisdom at the peak of devotion or peak of knowledge.

Let me tell you about Triveni Sangam, what is called *Prayag* in India. It is a confluence of three sacred rivers – Ganga, Yamuna and Saraswati, near the city of Allahabad. While the former two are visible, the third flows underground and becomes visible only at the point of merging. Ganga is the river of Lord Shiva and stands for knowledge or *jñāna*. All Shiva temples are on the banks of river Ganga. Yamuna is the river of Lord Krishna and stands for devotion or *bhakti*. All Krishna temples are on the banks of river Yamuna. When Ganga and Yamuna merge, when knowledge and devotion merge, Saraswati (or wisdom) automatically happens! Unless this merging happens, we cannot see or experience wisdom. That is why Saraswati remains hidden until the point of merging!

The last two verses can be misunderstood if misinterpreted. Krishna says, 'Anyone can reach Me through devotion, whether they are women, traders or workers, or even sinners.' He makes a point that there is no pre-qualification. Even in the age of Krishna, there was a distinction between various trades as well as between men and women. Krishna is pragmatic in acknowledging this fact and is not trying to justify the distinction.

Someone asked Ramana Maharshi whether he was qualified to enter a spiritual path. Ramana asked him, 'Are you still breathing?' Taken aback the man said, 'Yes.' Ramana said that was qualification enough; if he was alive, he was qualified.

Krishna's message is the same. All one needs is devotion to attain Krishna consciousness. Nothing else is needed.

In the *vedic* system, the caste system was a scientific practice to enable each one's potential to radiate. The *varṇa* or caste system practiced by Hindus from time immemorial had its roots in the *gurukul* education. Actually *varṇa* meant vocation, which was determined by the master for each child. It was not based upon birth as birthright, rather it was based upon aptitude.

When a child was admitted into the *gurukul*, the master saw what his natural tendencies were. If he had *brāhmaṇa* tendencies, he was initiated into *Veda Vidya* (studying scriptures). If his personality was that of a *kṣatriya* (warrior), he was trained in martial arts. If he showed *vaiśya* tendencies (business skills), he received merchant training. If he seemed to possess *śūdra* qualities (like labourers), he was initiated into service. All four roles had equal value and earned equal respect.

Unfortunately, over time this practice became a birthright. The son of a warrior was assumed to be a warrior, irrespective of his capabilities, aptitude or inclination. So, the four *varṇa* or castes, *brāhmaṇa*, the priest and teacher, *kṣatriya*, the ruler and warrior, *vaiśya*, the trader and businessman, and *śūdra*, the worker, became rigid social structures based upon birthright.

This corruption of such a scientific practice has led to many social inequalities and injustices. The son of a *brāhmaṇa* has no right to call himself a *brāhmaṇa*, unless he has the aptitude and then the learning to be a teacher and a priest. In our ashram, many young men and women from different castes and religious groups are being trained in spiritual and religious rituals, which had been considered the prerogative of the *brāhmaṇa* caste. We now have *brahmachāri* priests, men and women, who are of faiths other than Hindu. In no way are these young priests inferior to any *brāhmaṇa*.

The point Krishna makes here is that irrespective of caste, a person who has faith and devotion to Him can attain Him. Even if a person does not lead the life of a *brāhmaṇa*, he can reach and experience the ultimate consciousness. A person may follow any profession; however, if his inner space is cleansed, he can attain and experience Krishna consciousness.

Now, a *brāhmaṇa* is exposed to the scriptures and is trained to attain the knowledge of the ultimate Truth. He is exposed to the atmosphere that is conducive for meditation and other spiritual practices in the ashram. How much easier it is for a *brāhmaṇa*! See, if Krishna is so accessible for anybody, then imagine how much more accessible He is for a person constantly engaged in His thoughts!

All practices, like meditation and rituals, cleanse the inner space. When this space is cleansed, transformation automatically happens. It is a shame if a person claims to practice meditation for many years, yet there is no transformation inside. Many times people tell me, 'Swamiji, I have been meditating for twenty five years.' They tell me this proudly. I tell them, 'What a shame, if even after twenty five years of meditation, this remains your state!'

In the last verse of this chapter Krishna says, 'Engage your mind, always thinking of Me.'

Please understand that the whole universe, the whole cosmos is intelligence and it responds to our thoughts, it responds to our consciousness, to our very being.

Let me narrate an incident from my life:

Some time after enlightenment, I was sitting in a forest in Tamil Nadu. There was a big snake lying just next to me. I had my eyes open but was resting in the universal consciousness, in a meditative mood. Several hours must have passed before I came out of my meditative state and the first thought that came to my mind was, 'Oh, it is a snake.' As long as I was in the meditative state, I did not think of the snake. You will be surprised that as soon as the thought of the snake came to my mind, the snake began to realize that I was a man! It looked up, put down its hood and moved away. The fear in me triggered the fear in the snake.

The entire universe responds to each and every thought that we have. It is pure intelligence. So we must be careful about what we think. We are careful when we talk to others. We literally decorate our words and make sure nobody is hurt. However when it comes to ourselves, we treat our inside worse than a garbage can. A continuous stream of random thoughts, worries, fantasy, etc. goes on all the time. It is like a continuous television going on inside and we have misplaced the remote control to stop it!

See, our inner space reflects the outer incidents. The entire universe responds beautifully to each and every thought. That is why it is so important to keep our inner space cleansed. The thought patterns that happen inside can be cleansed and

kept positive. When the thought patterns are positive, only positive incidents are attracted.

See, it is like this. If we are constantly worried and fear that we will fall ill, we attract incidents that make us fall ill again and again. Similarly, if we are constantly happy and blissful, we attract blissful events and happy people in our lives. When Krishna says, 'Engage your mind in always thinking of Me', He speaks about cleansing the inner space. When our mind is engaged in thinking of the Divine, we become divine. The moment we understand this, we relax into eternal bliss.

The moment we relax into eternal bliss, the Divine takes care of us. Whatever we lack is brought to us and whatever we have is preserved for us. Naturally, we will experience and enjoy both the inner space and the outer space. This is the ultimate secret that Krishna reveals to Arjuna.

Let us pray to the *Parabrahma* Krishna, the Divine consciousness, the cosmic intelligence to make us understand this secret and experience the outer space and the inner space with eternal bliss, *nityānanda*. Thank you!

Q: Swamiji, how can we differentiate our desires from what we have borrowed from others?

It is simple. First, true desires always make you feel content and happy when they are fulfilled. On the other hand, a desire that is not yours makes you feel uncomfortable at the end of it. You feel as though you have run after something you never wanted from deep within. It usually comes with a trace of guilt or discontentment at the end of it. You also feel tired and fatigued.

Please be very clear, a desire that is genuinely your own carries with it the energy to fulfill it. Once it has been fulfilled, a positive feeling of satisfaction flowers and that desire no longer bothers you. It has been fulfilled so it drops from your very being, freeing you from it. Logically speaking, when all these desires are answered, we become completely free. Till then, our desires run our lives.

However, the problem is that we waste so much time and effort fulfilling somebody else's desires. Naturally, we feel drained because we are left with no energy to listen to what we want from deep within. By the time we understand that we should direct our energy to working towards fulfilling our desires, we have accumulated a lot more desires inside. And there is no more time left, we must say goodbye to the world.

Then we take another body and start the whole process once again. We come with our updated baggage of desires and once again, instead of fulfilling them, we spend our energy in accumulating more desires. Please understand, if you spend your energy accumulating more dreams all the time, then when will you have the energy to fulfill any of them?

That is the reason we live with a constant sense of discontentment throughout life. First we need to figure out what our wants are, then, we must work towards them. When this process is done with awareness, there is no room for envy or jealousy.

In our Nithyananda Spurana Program, also called Life Bliss Program Level 2, when we work on the second energy layer of *pranic* energy we go deep into our desires, needs and borrowed wants. Participants compile a list of all that they think are their desires now. At the end of the meditation process related to the *pranic* layer, they find to their surprise that what remains in their memory is a fraction of what they had so laboriously written down. It is as if they had a tree full of leaves, and after meditation all the withered leaves had fallen off leaving a few energized leaves on the tree.

This meditation brings to focus the *prārabdha karma*, the desires carried over from one's previous birth. These desires are our genuine desires and they carry their energy for fulfillment. Once these *prārabdha karma* desires are fulfilled, we are no longer in the bondage of *karma*. We are liberated.

People say, 'It is not our fault that we have forgotten our genuine desires that we left the last body with.' Not being able to remember what those desires are may not be your doing. However, the desires with which you left your body in your last life *were* your doing; it was your free will. If you meditate deeply, it is possible to understand what those desires were and what the purpose of your life is this time around.

If instead, you decide to follow your senses, and not only *your* senses, but the senses of all other people who surround you and then decide to blame Existence for not remembering anything, nothing can help you. You will continually go through the cycle of *samsāra*, life and death.

Just by listening to these great truths and by going through specially designed meditation programs, you can recollect and re-experience the desires with which you were born. By focusing on these desires you can dissolve your *karma* and be liberated. It is possible. And that is why enlightened masters happen again and again: to make us understand that it is possible and also show us how.

Thus ends the ninth chapter named Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga, 'Supreme knowledge and secret,' of the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of Yoga dealing with the Science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna.

BhagavadGita

You Are The Ultimate

CHAPTER 10

I am the Creator, the Created and the Creation.
All else is illusion. Know Me and be liberated.



- ◆ Swamiji, you have spoken of surrender. Is it the same as renunciation?
- ◆ Swamiji, you say it is okay to follow other masters and it is like picking beautiful flowers to make a garland. But what if the result is comparison between one master and another as a continuous process? One will end up nowhere.
- ◆ Is the principle of Tao, that there is good and bad in everything, being proclaimed by Krishna in these verses?
- ◆ Swamiji, what about people who cannot live in an ashram? Does this mean they cannot be successful in their spiritual endeavors?
- ◆ Swamiji, what is the best way to approach one's master?
- ◆ You say that ego needs to be dropped to realize the Self and be enlightened. You say ego is the identity we carry. But to live in this material world one needs an identity. How can we function otherwise?
- ◆ Krishna talks about the churning of the milky ocean and of the many beings that came out of the ocean. What is the significance of this event and the beings that emerged from the ocean of milk?
- ◆ You have talked about the master and the Zen stick. Why is this Zen stick or *yoga daṇḍa* needed, since the master is compassion incarnate?



You Are The Ultimate

This chapter, the tenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, is called *Vibhūti Yoga*, the yoga of divine manifestations. In this chapter, Krishna explains His glories. In the last chapter, He explained the ultimate secret of how to feel deeply connected with the whole of Existence. Now He goes on at length and in great detail explaining how He is the ultimate and how He expresses Himself.

People often see me observing and appreciating my own photographs. They see me listening to songs in my praise and enjoying them. They see me dressed in finery at times and think I am admiring myself. To me, this body, 'I,' is not reality. My skin is foreign to me, leave alone what I wear on top of my skin. Most of the time I wear a two piece saffron clothing. I am equally comfortable in that as I am with more expensive garments that I wear for special occasions. I look at myself as you look at me, and I am equally appreciative!

An enlightened being has no identity. His only identity is the merged identity with the universe. When Krishna, the ultimate master, talks about Himself in this chapter, He talks from the perspective of *Parabrahma* Krishna, the cosmic Krishna and not Vasudeva Krishna, the son of Vasudeva, the mortal Krishna. The entire Gita is delivered from Krishna's cosmic consciousness. In this chapter especially, He is at the peak of His cosmic consciousness, before He reveals Himself as that consciousness to Arjuna in the next chapter.

Every word that the great *Jagatguru*, the universal master utters here, is a gift to Arjuna and to humanity. The verses in this chapter are the authority on which the Bhagavad Gita rests. It is these verses that make the Gita, a sacred scripture.

10.1 Lord Krishna said:

Listen again, Oh Arjuna! You are My dear friend,

Listen carefully again, I shall speak further on knowledge for your welfare.

Please understand, a master's relationship with his disciple is in many forms. Usually it is described in five forms.

The most basic relationship between a master and disciple is that of a master and a servant, *dāsa bhāvā*. The relationship of Hanuman with Rama represents this type. Another is the relationship of a mother with her child, *vātsalya bhāvā*, as in the case of Yasodha to infant Krishna. The third is the relationship of a child with the mother, *mātru bhāvā*, like the relation of Ramakrishna to Mother Kali.

The fourth relationship is that of friendship, *sakha bhāvā*, feeling that the master is the closest friend. The fifth is that of the beloved, *madhura bhāvā*, like the relationship of Radha to Krishna.

Here, Krishna refers to the fourth relationship, *sakha bhāvā*, as exemplified by His friendship with Arjuna. He is the master to His disciple Arjuna as well as Arjuna's friend.

In the last chapter, Krishna gave the technique or the understanding of feeling deeply connected with the Whole, with Existence. He told Arjuna that He is revealing the greatest of all secrets to him because Arjuna is His dear friend. Now He explains the next step.

Usually, as an individual ego, we see the Whole as our enemy. We are like small waves in a big ocean. However, suddenly, the wave starts thinking that the ocean is its enemy. When it is created, while it exists or when it drops, the wave is connected to the ocean. However, the wave thinks that it is in some way different from the ocean. Not only that, the wave starts fighting with the ocean. For the wave to realize that it is fully connected to the ocean, it must be consumed by the ocean. The ego must dissolve. The individual identity of the wave must disappear. This is the first step to enlightenment.

We live in the illusion of our self-created identities. Each wave relates to another wave but not to the ocean. It adopts another wave as its father, mother, wife or child and relates with them. However, ultimately, each one of these related waves disappears into the ocean just like the wave itself.

Yet, the impermanence of its own existence as a wave as well as the impermanence of other waves around it to whom it feels related, does not sink in easily. It is difficult when we are a wave, to see beyond ourselves to our connection to the ocean. We must rise beyond the individuality of our existence as a wave to see that we are part of the larger ocean.

If we look at the human body, we can see this oneness so beautifully exemplified. The human body consists of trillions of cells living in total harmony. If we look at the individual cell though, it has intelligence by itself. It can survive even if its center, the nucleus, which is considered the central intelligence of the cell, is removed.

However, when it is a part of the whole body, it is not the intelligence of the individual cell alone that is at work, but the collective intelligence of the body-mind system that governs. This collective intelligence ensures that this remarkable system of the human body-mind works smoothly.

A small story:

A visitor was curious to know whether a particular town would be a good place for him to settle down. He asked a local farmer, 'What do you think about the mayor of the town?'

The farmer replied, 'That man does not do anything for the town. He is useless.'

The visitor went along and met a potter. He asked the same question. The potter replied, 'My life has hardly improved after he became mayor. I am waiting for the next election so that he will be removed from his post.'

The visitor then went for lunch to a small restaurant. He asked the restaurant owner what he thought about the mayor. The owner replied, 'I don't know which fool elected him. He does not know anything about his work.'

Now, the visitor was curious to know what the mayor thought about his own work. He scheduled an appointment with the mayor and asked him, 'Sir, how much do you get paid for your job?'

The mayor replied, 'Pay? I don't get paid anything for this job. I took it up because it gives me prestige!'

Our ego makes us think that we are the center of the world and we try to protect our status constantly. For anybody else, our ego has no meaning. Everyone has far greater concerns in their lives. They are worried about themselves. They don't have time to think about us.

A small story:

The enlightened Japanese master Suzuki wept profusely when his master passed away. Someone asked him, 'You are enlightened. You shouldn't be crying over your master's death.'

Suzuki replied, 'My master was the most extraordinary man on planet earth.' The person asked him, 'What was so extraordinary about him?'

Suzuki replied, 'I have never seen such an extraordinary person who thought he was the most ordinary.'

The thing about enlightened people is that they think they are ordinary. And the thing about unenlightened people is that they think they are extraordinary! When we feel that we have undergone maximum suffering, our ego feels good; we feel we are extraordinary. Only when our enemy is big, we feel big. When our enemy is small, we feel small. For the same reason, if our suffering is big, we feel good and our ego is satisfied. We measure life by the amount of our suffering. That is why we constantly torture others as well as ourselves.

Suzuki's master was extraordinary because he thought he was the most ordinary person, whereas everyone else in this world thinks he is extraordinary.

When people have depression, they feel big. If we look deeply, everyone thinks he is extraordinary because he thinks his problems and his arguments are the greatest. A man who feels ordinary and believes in simplicity, gives respect to everybody's arguments. He knows how to put himself in another's shoes.

Because of our ego, we think that we are extraordinary and that a lot of things happen in this world because of us. We are all unique creations of Existence but we are not responsible for the world. The wave cannot attribute to itself the power of the ocean. It must realize that it is a part of the ocean. Instead, if it tries to separate itself from the ocean, it is a futile effort.

All of us think that the world runs because of us. Please be very clear that the world does not run because of us. It runs in spite of us! Fifty years before our birth, don't you think the world was running as it is now? Fifty years hence, do you think the world will stop because you are not here?

A proverb says that if the cat closes its eyes, it thinks the whole world has become dark! This is similar to the ostrich sticking its head in the sand when it sees impending danger. It thinks because it can't see the world for those few moments, no one can see it either!

A small story:

A man was sitting in a boat while the boatman did his best to row the boat as fast as he could. The man needed to reach the other side of the riverbank.

The man became impatient and began pacing back and forth inside the boat. After some time, he started running inside the boat.

The boatman said, 'Please sit down and allow me to row the boat.' The man replied, 'I have no time to be seated. I need to reach the other side as soon as possible!'

If we look at ourselves, this is what we do most of the time. We run inside the boat. Of what use is it?

Ramana Maharshi describes a beautiful story:

A man was traveling on a train carrying his luggage on his head. A fellow passenger asked, 'Why are you carrying your luggage on your head? You can put it down and sit peacefully.'

The man replied, 'It would be too heavy for the train!'

Little did he realize that the train was even now not only carrying him, but his luggage as well! In the same way, the Divine not only takes care of you, it also takes care of your mind. But you always think you are taking care of yourself. That is the foolishness of the mind.

We are waves of the Divine. We are part of this Whole. We cannot exist as an island. We cannot be an isolated existence. We exist in the cosmic Whole just as the wave exists in the vast expanse of the ocean. The ego gives us the feeling that we are individual, separate and isolated whereas the reality is that we are a part of this Existence, in it and supported by it.

There are two ways in which we can live. First, we can embrace and welcome reality, in which case our ego must dissolve because only then can we face reality. Please understand that this reality is God. God is not some entity hidden in some remote corner of the universe or in the sky. He is the reality around us.

The second way of living is how most of us live: We create a shell, a dream world around ourselves to defend a false ego which has no substance in reality. This is what is meant by *māyā* - illusion. In Sanskrit, there is a beautiful explanation of this term *māyā*: *Yā mā iti māyā*. That which does not exist but which troubles us as if it exists is *māyā*, illusion!

Since we are hidden in this capsule of our unreal world with our ego as the center, we cannot feel the immediate presence of God, who is actually the closest to us.

The *prānā* (vital energy) which is going inside our body and coming out, is not our property. It is the property of Existence. *Prānā* is not the air that we breathe in and out. *Prānā* is the vital energy that the air that we breathe in carries with it. Air is a mere vehicle to carry the *prānā*. Just like a truck carries and delivers material for the construction of a house, air acts as a carrier for the vital energy, *prānā*. We do not need air to survive. We need *prānā* to survive.

Constantly, the air goes in, leaves the *prānā* inside and comes out. Constantly, we take *prānā* through the air from the cosmos. If the incoming breath carries more *prānā* than the outgoing breath, we are going towards life. Then, we expand, we strengthen our body and we strengthen our energy. If the outgoing breath carries more *prānā* than the incoming breath, be very clear, we are going towards death.

Understand that whatever we think of as our being cannot function if *prānā* doesn't go in and come out.

Again and again, we think that we end where the physical boundary of our body ends and anything outside that boundary constitutes the external world. This physical boundary is not our boundary. We think that whatever is outside the physical boundary of our body constitutes Existence and that it is our enemy.

Imagine that the sun disappears one day. Do you think we could live without the rays of the sun? If the air were to disappear, will we be able to survive? If we are dependent for our survival on the sun that is billions of miles away, how can our boundary end where the physical boundary of our body ends? Understand, we are deeply related to Existence.

None of us can exist by ourselves. We are not completely separate, self-sufficient entities. We are part of an interconnected Whole. When we lose sight of the Whole, we become unaware of our links to one another.

Interesting studies on cells in organisms have established that each cell can only act in one of two ways at any given time. It can focus on growth or on self-protection. It cannot do both simultaneously. A cell placed in a dish moves spontaneously towards a nutrient placed on another part of the same dish. If a toxin is placed in the dish instead of the nutrient, the cell moves away from the toxin. If the nutrient and toxin are placed at the same time in the dish, the cell is in a dilemma.

Within the body system, the cellular intelligence normally focuses on growth by diverting blood flow and oxygen flow, which is the *prānā* or energy flow, to the growth centers of the body. However, when the body-mind detects an external or

internal threat, a series of actions are initiated to divert the energy flow to the limbs for protection. As long as the threat remains, growth is sacrificed in favor of protection. The body-mind fights or flees the threat.

Since you consider Existence to be your enemy, you continuously try to protect yourself from others. Look at yourself carefully and you will notice that you always look at people with the attitude, 'Why has he come? What is he going to steal from me? What is he going to take from me? How will he exploit me?'

Continuously, you are in a protective mood, trying to protect yourself from others. The moment you see somebody, you start the calculation, 'Why is he here? What should I do before he does something to me?' You defend yourself. You are always calculating because you feel threatened by the existence of the other. The moment you think Existence or the Whole is your enemy, you become defensive. Defending is a polite word for offending. All over the world, the military forces of all countries are called defensive armies. Then who is offending? Every country claims that its army is an army for defending itself. Then who is really offending?

The idea of defending is a subtle way of offending. When you feel the Whole is your enemy, that everybody except you is your enemy, you spy continuously and fight constantly.

The fighting mood creates an increasingly violent feeling in you, with more and more restlessness. The first thing Krishna teaches as *rājavidya rājaguhyam* (secret of secrets), is that Existence is not your enemy. It responds to your thoughts. It continuously cares for you. It is intelligence.

Please be very clear: If you live with the attitude of enmity, even when you live, you will be dying. When you live with the attitude of enmity with the Whole, you will constantly be tortured. When you live with the feeling of friendliness, with the attitude that Existence is your friend, that Existence is your own, you feel a deep easiness.

We need to realize that we are part of the same energy system as the universe. The wave must understand that it is part of the same energy system as the ocean. Hindu scriptures describe the five energy elements that comprise Nature: earth, water, fire, air and ether. All major cultural traditions such as the Chinese have a similar understanding. The human system is a combination of the same elements as the universe, so are all beings, inanimate and animate.

Even scientifically, we are understood to be energy at the most basic level. There is no longer any confusion that matter and energy are different. The singularity

concept establishes that matter and energy are not only convertible from one to another, but they also exist together as one. We are the universe and the universe is us.

Above all, more than the easiness, you will feel deeply connected to Existence. Even if the wave thinks that it is different from the ocean and starts defending itself from the ocean, ultimately it will fall into the ocean, however much it tries to defend itself!

By its very nature, the wave starts in the ocean, exists in the ocean and falls into the ocean. If it understands that it is a part of the ocean, it will be utterly relaxed. It will live a blissful life. If it fights the fact, it will fight with the ocean. But eventually it has to fall into the ocean.

The ultimate secret that Krishna wants to reveal is that Existence, *Parāśakti*, *Brahman*, is your friend, not your enemy. It is intelligence and it responds to your thoughts. This is the first understanding. Next, in this chapter, Krishna says, 'I am That.' He says, 'I am the whole of Existence.' In the next chapter, He gives the experience of the cosmic consciousness to Arjuna. These chapters lead Arjuna step-by-step to an elevated consciousness.

In the previous chapter, Krishna says, 'Don't have enmity with Existence.' In this chapter, He says, 'I am the same energy. Not only you don't have need to have enmity, you can have deep love.' In the previous chapter He says, 'Drop your enmity against the universal energy, *Brahman* and *ātman*.' Now, He explains how to feel connected to Existence. In the next chapter, He gives the cosmic experience. In the *Viśvarūpa Darśana Yoga*, He gives the experience to Arjuna that He is in the whole cosmic consciousness.

First, He removes enmity, then, He creates the feeling of connectedness. Finally, He gives the *advaitic* (non-dual) experience. These three chapters lead Arjuna step-by-step. They elevate Arjuna from a low level to a higher level.

Let us study this scripture with intense devotion and deep sincerity. Along with Arjuna, we will grow. We will not miss it.

Krishna says, 'For your benefit, because you are My dear friend, I shall speak to you further, giving knowledge that is better than what I have already explained.' Krishna explains His glory not for His own sake but for Arjuna's sake. Krishna does not explain His glory to show His ego.

You need to understand an important thing: The ego of the king is based upon how many people accept him as king. The more the number of people who accept

his ego, the greater his ego will be. Suddenly, if all the ministers, all the warriors and all his citizens are taken away from him, what will happen to his kingdom? What will happen to his kingdom? He will lose the base, he will lose the very idea of kingdom, and he will not be a king anymore. His ego will be totally shaken.

A beautiful story:

A great saint called Dakshinamurti Swamigal lived in Tamil Nadu. He lived the life of a *Paramahansa* (enlightened one). The sky was all that covered his body. He never wore clothing. He lived like a child, in bliss.

One day a king came to meet him. Swami was sitting under a big tree meditating blissfully. The king expected Swami to stand up and receive him with respect. Swami however did not bother. He did not care about the king. The king egoistically said, 'What! You are an ordinary beggar. I am a king. Don't you know how to respect me?'

The Swami laughed and said, 'Actually, you are the beggar. You are begging respect from me. You feel respected only when somebody gives you respect. However, I don't feel respected when somebody gives me respect nor do I feel disrespected when somebody doesn't give me respect. Whether somebody respects me or not, it is not in any way related to my consciousness. I do not ask you why you are not respecting me. I am not bothered about that. The moment you ask, you are a beggar.'

Then he continued, 'Your personality or ego could be shaken if your army and all your ministers leave you. Oh king, your being is dependent upon somebody else.'

That is why it is said that when Buddha begged for alms, He looked like a king and the kings looked like beggars! Outward possessions cannot make us regal. The inner bliss that radiates makes us regal.

Be very clear, that is why leaders are always in trouble. Never think leaders lead us. We lead the leaders. The honest truth is that as long as we accept them as a leader, they will be our leader. Just as we are concerned about their ideas, they are also concerned about our opinions. Continuously, they are bothered about our ideas.

Dakshinamurti Swamigal says, 'You are a king as long as your citizens accept you. So naturally, directly or indirectly, you will be begging your citizens to accept you because your consciousness is dependent upon them. In my case, that is not true.

Whether somebody accepts or not, I am blissful! I am a *Paramahamsa*. My *Paramahamsa*-hood can never be taken away from me. But your kingdom can be taken away from you. So be sure that the moment you ask for respect, you are a beggar. I am not.'

A clear truth is that the person whose ego is enriched by more and more citizens is a politician. He is an egoistic person. But an enlightened man reveals himself for the sake of the disciple's understanding. Here, Krishna does not speak about Himself out of ego. Whether Arjuna accepts it or not, Krishna is Krishna.

Krishna was in a blissful state even before Arjuna became His disciple. Krishna will be in a blissful state even after Arjuna becomes His disciple. Irrespective of whether Arjuna is His disciple or not, Krishna is in the same blissful consciousness.

One important thing: In the next chapter, Arjuna says, 'Oh Krishna! Forgive me. I called You by Your community name: 'Hey Krishna, Hey Yadava, Hey Saketi! I called You by Your first name. I called You by Your community name.' In India, if you are a very close friend to a person, only then you call him by his community name. Arjuna says, 'I called You by Your community name: Yadava (Krishna's community). I called You Krishna, Yadava and I called You my friend! I called You by these names thinking that You are my friend, a normal human being like me. But now, I understand. You are the God of gods. You are Mahadeva (supreme God). Forgive me please, I beg of You! You must forgive me and accept me as Your disciple. Forgive me for my ignorance. I did not know Your greatness, please forgive me!'

Because of this statement, Krishna's ego does not become big. Please understand: Krishna was safe. He had all the glory from day one until the very end. Even with all His glory, He allowed Arjuna to call Him by His first name and community names. He never said, 'Don't you know who I am? How dare you call me by my first name?' He never carried a business card!

Carrying a business card is the biggest problem. Observe how people behave. Wherever they go, the first thing they ask is, 'Do you know who I am?' We carry a business card. We give this card to whomsoever we meet.

Not only that, there is an important thing to be understood about this: Never think that your business card is wallet-sized. It is of a huge billboard's size! Just because you can't carry that, you carry a small version. Your business card is the size of a billboard. Because you can't carry it wherever you go, you carry it in a small way. After giving that card, you say, 'I am this; I am that.' Krishna never carried a business card. Krishna never bothered about it.

A small Zen story:

The governor of a Japanese province came to visit a celebrated Zen master. The governor, as was the custom, sent in his business card through an attendant. The master read the card, 'Suzuki, governor of Kobe Region.'

The master said loudly enough so that the governor could hear, 'Tell that idiot I have no time to meet governor!'

The disciple took the card back to the governor. The governor was an intelligent man. He crossed out the word 'Governor' and sent it back saying Suzuki wants to meet the master to seek advice.

The Zen master happily received him!

A master cares nothing about business cards or who you are or what your status is. He is only concerned about the state of your being.

Even when Arjuna was talking to Krishna in a friendly way, He was humble. Krishna responded to Arjuna in the same way that Arjuna spoke to Him. Suddenly now, Arjuna says, 'Krishna! I didn't know You were such a great person. You are God Himself. Please forgive me.'

Even after this, Krishna does not become egoistic. He says, 'Don't worry. Don't bother about that.' He is simple. He is humble.

Before the experience, at the time of the experience and after the experience, Krishna is the same. Only Arjuna undergoes a tremendous change. Before the Gita started, at the time of the Gita and after the Gita, Krishna is the same. But before the Gita, Arjuna was different. At the time of the Gita, Arjuna was growing. After the Gita, he was a totally different man.

Here, Krishna does not explain His glories out of ego. He explains to give an understanding to Arjuna. He explains so that Arjuna will experience Him. When Krishna says, 'I am,' He means the cosmic consciousness, the egoless being and the enlightened energy.

Again and again, He expresses the glory of enlightenment, the glory of *ātmajñāna* (knowledge of the Self). That is why He is so confident and clear. With such clarity, He explains, 'I am Everything.' Even to utter these words, you need courage. No normal man can say, 'I am God' to somebody else. If he does, the next day he will be in a mental asylum with a special seat reserved for him!

Here, Krishna is courageous enough to declare and the person who is listening experiences it.

What is the science? What does it take for an enlightened man to declare himself as enlightened and as God? What do we need as a disciple to experience that as the truth?

Many hundreds of enlightened masters declare this truth again and again. Sometimes the people who listen to them become enlightened like Arjuna or Vivekananda. Sometimes the disciple is hurt and disturbed by the statement and crucifies the master.

Ramakrishna said, 'The one who came as Rama, who came as Krishna, is residing in this body as Ramakrishna.' He boldly declared this, not when he was healthy, but when he was suffering from throat cancer. He affirmed, 'Who came as Rama, who came as Krishna, has come down in this body as Ramakrishna.' These words did something in Vivekananda. It was then that Narendra became Vivekananda.

When Krishna declared, 'I am God,' Arjuna became enlightened. How? What do you need to create this experience?

See, be very clear that the experiences of Krishna, Christ, Buddha and Mahavira, are all one and the same. As the enlightenment experience, it is the same. When they express the enlightenment, why are there different reactions? When they express their enlightenment and declare their divinity, some people become enlightened and some run away.

How can we also become enlightened when we listen to Krishna's words? How can we listen? How can we have that benefit? How is that to happen? With what mood are we supposed to receive the words?

When people who hear this declaration of truth, *vibhūti*, the glory, are egoistic and aggressive, they crucify the master. If they are egoistic but not aggressive, they run away.

Next, Arjuna, Krishna's disciple, is totally in love with Krishna. He has totally surrendered to Krishna. He is not ready to suspect anything. By now, he is clear. His head has stopped working. His logic has stopped analyzing.

This truth should be declared only to a person who is totally, intimately related and feeling connected to the Divine.

Arjuna has completely surrendered to Krishna. What is surrender? When we hear the word 'surrender', we think that it is the easiest thing to do since we don't need

to do anything. For example, if we meditate, we need to do something. But if we need to surrender, we think we don't need to do anything. Hence, we think it is easy.

This is because we think about surrender in a totally different way compared to what the masters mean by the word 'surrender'. When we use the word 'surrender', we only say that we have surrendered. We do not really surrender.

A small story:

A man lived without any faith in God. One day he suddenly fell from a ledge and was dangling from a hilltop barely holding onto a tree's root. He was totally scared and remembered people saying that God can help in the most hopeless situation.

He called out, 'Oh God! I have never had faith in you. Are you really there? Can you save me now?'

God answered, 'Surely I can, son. Simply let go of the root that you are holding and I will catch you from below.'

The man cried out again, 'Is there anyone else out there who can help me?'

Our faith and surrender are mere words. We delude ourselves thinking we have surrendered. In fact, we have not. Our faith, our surrender is never total surrender. There are three levels of surrender: Surrendering the 'I,' surrendering the mind, and finally, surrendering both the 'I' and the mind.

Surrendering the 'I' is surrendering the individual ego. Surrendering the mind is surrendering the mental setup, the mental conditioning.

A small incident from Ramakrishna's life:

A devotee came to Ramakrishna saying that he was addicted to alcohol and did not know how to give it up. Ramakrishna gave him a simple though surprising remedy. He told him to surrender the drinking habit to Mother Kali.

The man was obviously shocked but he started offering the drink to Kali before drinking. He came back in three days to Ramakrishna saying that he had given up drinking. Not only had he given up his drinking habit, but he also could not drink anymore! The drinking habit had dropped him.

When you truly surrender to the Divine, surrender can work miracles on you. If you think logically as well, how can you offer a drink to Devi, to the goddess? The

next thing is if you cannot offer the drink to Devi, how can you drink it, since the same goddess resides in your body also?

When you offer yourself at the feet of the master, your ego disintegrates. The mind is just your collection of all the thoughts and habits that you have formed. For example, if you get up in the morning, your mind instinctively tells you that you need your morning coffee since that is a habit. Similarly, if you are constantly worried, it becomes a habit and you worry in every situation without realizing it.

When someone praises you, you choose to get flattered. If someone criticizes you, you choose to get disturbed. The mental setup has been etched so deeply that you don't realize that it is you who is making the choice of how to react. When you surrender, you cannot choose.

A small story:

One day, Lord Vishnu and goddess Lakshmi were in a relaxed mood and having a chat in heaven. Suddenly, Vishnu jumped up from His seat and ran a few yards. Then he made a U-turn and returned to His seat.

Lakshmi was perplexed and asked, 'Lord, why did You run in the first place? Then, why did You return immediately after running only a few yards?'

Vishnu replied, 'I saw a man in the process of stoning one of My devotees. I ran to help. Then I saw him pick up stones to retaliate. Seeing that, I decided that he did not need My help.'

When you surrender, you cannot choose to react. When you surrender, the egocentric 'I' totally disintegrates. Please understand: The egocentric 'I' is eccentric.

When you surrender, you will be bubbling with joy and bliss. You will be like a kid. Have you seen an ugly child? Even in the poorest country, the kids are beautiful. On the same count, have you seen a single adult who is beautiful? Enlightened people are like children, bubbling with bliss. They are called *dvija* (born again). After the death of the ego, it is a new birth. The father and mother give us our first birth. The second birth is given by God and the guru.

You see, there are three types of joy. The first is joy due to the senses, which is called pleasure. This joy is like the pleasure of taste on eating tasty food.

The second type of joy is experienced through nature. When you see a majestic mountain, a beautiful serene sunrise, a river gushing down, you feel this joy. Just at the moment you perceive this beauty in nature, your mind stops working and you

stand in awe in front of the beautiful sunrise. Very soon though, your mind kicks in with, 'This is a beautiful sunrise.' But just before this thought, you experience pure joy.

The last type of joy happens for no reason. This is bliss. It is a continuous, constant bubbling of joy and ecstasy in your being without the need for any external agent. You can experience this when you surrender your sense of 'I,' your ego. Then, your mind will have spontaneity. As of now, you are constantly preparing for the future.

Even if you must meet a friend, in your mind you prepare what to discuss, what to do. You have no strength to face the situation. So you write a script and enact that. If something happens that does not conform to your script, you struggle to handle the situation.

If you understand that Existence is your friend and it deeply cares for you, you will not feel the need to live according to a script. Instead, you will have tremendous courage and trust in yourself to live life spontaneously. Then, instead of re-living life and reacting to life based upon past memories and experiences, you live life with spontaneous responses to situations. If you live in a simple way, you don't need a script. If you live based upon the truth, you don't need to remember the lies that you told your friend the last time in order to maintain them.

Every moment we project what we are not. Once we project this false image, we need a script to remember what we have projected. We are so careful not to make small mistakes that we make the biggest blunder of all - living according to a script and enacting the same drama over and over again!

Please understand that Existence constantly cares for you. Trust the intelligence in you. Accept and welcome life as it flows.

Krishna says, 'If you continuously merge in Me, I will take care of all your needs and necessities. You will be My responsibility.'

In the last chapter Krishna promises: *yogakṣemaṁ vahāmyaham*: My responsibility is Yoga, to get the things that you need, and *kṣema*, to take care that they remain with you. *Vahāmyaham*: He makes this promise: He says, 'I will take care of you spiritually and materially. You shall not lack anything. You will always be in bliss.' You may wonder how this is possible. When you surrender to the Divine, your higher consciousness will be activated and you will have the intelligence and courage to live everything.

Vivekananda, in his commentary on Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, says that our prayers to God do only one thing: Awaken our own inner potential energy. When you pray intensely, banish the thought that your prayers are heard somewhere and someone blesses you. Your own inner potential energy is awakened and showers its blessings upon you in the form of God, irrespective of what form you worship.

The ultimate intelligence is first understanding that Existence cares for us, and secondly, surrendering to that Existence. Realizing that Existence is not a brute force or power but an intelligent energy, is the key to a life of bliss.

When we surrender the mind, we go from 'mind' to 'no-mind' state. The mind actually arises from possessiveness. *Tantra* says that the ego is based upon possessions. Look deeply and we will see that the origin of our mind lies in whatever we think of as ours. Our idea of 'mine' creates the sense of 'I'. Most of us think that from 'I,' the 'mine' arises. No! It is from the sense of 'mine' that 'I' arises. The root of the tree of 'I' is 'mine'.

We think that if we have more possessions, we have more freedom. Yes, we will have more freedom, but only the freedom to choose between one suffering and another suffering. We can never choose between suffering and joy through possessiveness. How can we enjoy something with the feeling of possessiveness? We will be in constant fear of losing our possessions. The feeling of 'mine' never lets us enjoy anything.

Let me share a real incident from my life:

There was an old lady in my village who would ask me to get tobacco leaves for her every morning. I would ask her for money to buy the tobacco leaves. She would ask me to ask my father for the money. I bought her tobacco leaves everyday with my father's money thinking that she was poor and could not afford to pay for them.

The woman's home had a big well that was always full. She was so possessive that she never allowed anybody to touch the water. Once in a medical emergency, the village doctor requested water from the well, but she refused. But when she was on her death-bed, the same doctor came to attend to her.

He asked her, 'Of what use to you now is the water in this well? Can you take this water with you?' The woman still did not feel that she had done anything wrong by refusing to give water to the doctor when he had asked for it.

Anyway, she passed away soon after. Subsequently the village people found a large box filled with jewelry under her bed! She had so much money and riches during her life. Yet, she never enjoyed it. She felt content and secure by just possessing the riches.

Man works hard at retaining wealth during his life and finally loses the capacity to enjoy it.

As of now, ninety nine percent of our time and energy is wasted on worrying. If we surrender, all that time and energy can be turned towards expressing our creativity. We will not have worry and suffering. We will not have pain. We will be learning lessons of life.

There is a beautiful book *How to Know God* written by a philosopher. The author observes that although no court of law has proved the existence of God, ninety percent of the people in the world believe in God. The result of this is that creativity has improved and life has become joyful because all the energy of worrying has been channeled into creativity.

J. Krishnamurti says beautifully, 'Ninety nine percent of your worries don't come true. The one percent that comes true is good for you.'

Ramakrishna narrates a beautiful story:

One night a man had a dream. He dreamt that he was walking on the beach with God. Suddenly, some scenes from his life flashed on the sky. For each scene, he saw that there were two sets of footprints on the sand; one was his and the other was God's.

He observed that many times along the path there was only one set of footprints. He also realised that it happened at the saddest times in his life. He felt really troubled and he asked God, 'Lord, you said that once I decided to follow you, you will walk with me all the way. But I saw that during the most troublesome times in my life, there was only one set of footprints. I don't understand why you left me when I needed you the most.'

God replied, 'My dear, I love you and I will never leave you. During your difficult times, when you saw only one set of footprints, I was carrying you.'

Just understand. When we surrender ourselves to Existence, it carries us in its very arms. We won't feel the pain of life. But if we try to calculate things after saying that we have surrendered, we project our mind onto the idea of what will happen after surrender. When we say that we have surrendered, how can we say

that nothing has happened in spite of our surrender? If we have truly surrendered, we have no right to expect something to happen after we have surrendered.

A master was asked, 'How do I know that I have really surrendered?' The master replied, 'If you have really surrendered, this question itself will disappear. There will be a feeling of utter bliss and relaxation.'

Just surrender everything, not only your pain and suffering but also your responsibility. This does not mean that you stop doing household work or going to office. You continue to do so but with the mood of utter relaxation. Surrendering yourself is a clear, conscious decision.

If we look into our lives, we see that our relating with God is never true surrender. Most of the time, we beg God to give us what we want. The next stage is when we bargain: If you give me this, I will give you that. The third stage is blaming God: I went to this temple so many times; yet, God has not listened to me.

Most of the time, we don't have the intelligence to know what we want. If God were to listen to our requests and desires, this world would have perished a long time ago! This game of begging, bargaining and blaming in the name of praying has nothing to do with true devotion.

There is a beautiful story in the Mahabharata:

Before the war started, Duryodhana and Arjuna went to Krishna's palace to seek help from Krishna for the war. Both of them were relatives of Krishna and wanted Krishna's help. Krishna was sleeping. Arjuna, the Pandavas' representative, sat at the feet of Krishna. Duryodhana, the Kauravas' representative, sat near the head of Krishna.

The moment Krishna opened His eyes, He saw Arjuna sitting at His feet. He asked him, 'How are you, Arjuna? When did you come?'

Arjuna said, 'I have come to seek your help.' Krishna said, 'Surely I will help, don't worry.'

Duryodhana who was sitting at the head of the bed said to Krishna, 'I came before Arjuna. You should help me first.'

Krishna turned and saw Duryodhana. Krishna replied, 'Surely I will help, don't worry.' He said, 'I will be on one side and my powers will be on the other side. Which one do you want?' Duryodhana who could choose first,

thought, 'Let us have *śakti* (power).' He replied, 'I will have your powers and weapons.' Arjuna thought, 'Let us have *buddhi* (intelligence).' He was happy to have just Krishna on his side. Obviously the Pandavas were the ones who won the war.

The man who chose intelligence, the man who trusted God, had intelligence and won the war. He won the game.

If we look deeply into what kind of a relationship we have with God, we will see that when we pray, we think that God has the power to give but He does not have the intelligence or wisdom to know what to give. This is what we believe when we insist that He gives us what we want right now.

If we trust God has only power, we never win in life. When we trust He also has wisdom, we surrender. Only then things can start happening. When we surrender, we believe that God has power and intelligence. When we believe God has only power, religion starts. When we believe He has wisdom, spirituality starts. When we believe He has only power, we do rituals and pamper Him. We start doing all possible things to continuously bribe Him to give us what we want. All rituals done with self-promotion are bribing. What do we do? Don't we tell the priest our name in front of God before we offer prayers? Do we think that He doesn't know our name? We go to the temple and tell the priest not only our name but our father's name, our forefathers' names, where we are from and so on. Do we think God doesn't know where we are from and who we are?

We describe everything in a detailed way. Why? We do not want the courier parcel of the blessings of God meant for us to reach someone else. We are afraid that our parcel, the boons that are supposed to come to us, will reach someone else. All our *pūjā* and bribing techniques prove clearly our arrogance, which again and again shows our belief that God has power but not intelligence.

Decide consciously that from this moment, you will surrender everything at the feet of God, to the energy that runs this whole world. We don't need to believe in any name or form. Trust the energy pervading the universe and trust it to run your life.

Now, even after we surrender, at some time, a doubt will naturally arise in us whether we have totally, actually surrendered. Understand that the divine intelligence gave us the intelligence to surrender in the first place and that same divine intelligence has given us this doubt to doubt our surrender. Surrender the doubt also at the feet of the divine energy. So do not wait to change and become

perfect before surrendering. No! Surrender yourself as you are, consciously, totally. Surrender deeply and your whole being will be flooded with new bliss.

Krishna says,

*mahābāho śṛṇu me paramam
vacaḥ yat te aham priyamāṇāya
vakṣyāmi hitakāmyayā*

Because you are My dear friend, you are deeply connected to Me, I am revealing this truth to you.

Let me explain a few basic things. Actually, when we feel deeply connected to some person, the person will almost look like God. We will feel so deeply related. If we feel deeply connected to the person, no matter whether it is our husband, wife, kids, parents or our master, he will look like God. Whatever he does, we will feel that he is divine.

Why do you think the eternal lovers Ambikavati and Amravati, Devadas and Parvati, Laila and Majnu, Romeo and Juliet, felt that the other person was God? They almost felt as if their partner was divine. They gave their life for the other person. Why?

When we feel deeply connected, when we feel deeply related, when we are in love with another being, that other being will look almost like God. Look at the great Mirabai. She was so much in love with Krishna who was not even physically in front of her. Yet, she felt so deeply connected to Him. She talked to Him, sang His praises and became totally immersed in Him. When Mirabai was given poison, she even drank that, totally surrendering herself to Krishna. The power of her love and devotion was such that even a deadly poison had no effect on her!

Vivekananda describes a *nāgā sanyāsi* who lived in a cave. All kinds of wild animals including snakes surrounded the area. He had many snakebite marks, but he was so connected to Existence that he welcomed snakes! All we need is the attitude of deeply connecting through the heart.

The problem is that we have forgotten how to connect through the heart. All our relationships have become superficial. Now, the wife is no more a wife. In the modern day society, the husband is no more a husband. He is just a boyfriend. She can be with him as long as she wants. She can leave him when she doesn't want.

Be very clear: In Sanskrit, we don't have an equivalent word for divorce. The idea never existed! In Hindu marriage, no divorce is allowed. We take an oath in

front of *agni* (fire), 'As long as you are alive, as long as I am alive, I will support you.' Both partners take this oath in front of *agni*. The *agni* is inside our body. The *Jatarāgni* which is the digestive fire inside our body is represented by the *agni* in the ritual fire outside.

As long as this fire is inside our body, we will be alive. The moment this fire in our body disappears, our body will be in fire in the cremation ground! Either the inner fire is in our body or our body will be put in outer fire.

In front of this fire as witness, we take the oath, 'Hereby I commit, as long as this body is alive, I will support you. As long as this body is alive, you will take care of me.' It is a commitment of a lifetime.

Sanskrit doesn't have an equivalent word for divorce because the concept did not exist at that time. With the cultural invasion of the so-called developed cultures, the materialistic cultures, changing the wife, house and car has now become a fashion. Once in three months, the house, car and wife become outdated.

Some time ago, a man asked me to bless his divorce. In India, a master is not only a spiritual person, he is also marriage-broker, stockbroker, financier, counselor, psychiatrist and a doctor! Masters are supposed to do all these things. Whatever decisions are advised by an enlightened person are for your good. Out of compassion and responsibility for the world, the master acts.

I asked this man to tell me the real problem before I gave advice. I always try to patch up differences between people. One should have a strong case before going for a drastic step.

The man replied, 'One day when my wife brought me hot coffee in the morning, she spilled it on me. The fight started from there.' He then went back down his memory lane to give all his arguments against her.

Some communities in India follow a custom at the time of marriage where the bride and groom compete to find a ring dropped in a pot of water. It is done more for fun. Whoever grabs the ring will have it. The man exclaimed, 'Right from that time, she spelled trouble for me. She scratched my hand while playing that game.' Look at the mentality! He has forgotten all the coffee she has brought him everyday before he wakes up. He feels no gratitude for that. Instead, he blames her for spilling coffee.

We forget the arguments that go against our judgment and pick up those that support it. If you scan your life and see how many times you do this, you will understand what I am saying.

The outer world is a projection of the inner world and the eye projects it. Whatever is visible as the outer world is a mere projection. For instance, if there was a scene in a movie we did not like, we would not be able to change it by clearing the screen. Instead, we need to switch off the projector or change the reel. Likewise, we try without success to change things in the outer world. Our frustration and depression are due to our attempt to manipulate the screen rather than the projector.

We fantasize about a holiday on a beautiful beach in Hawaii as ultimate bliss. However, when it happens, our thoughts are not of the beach but of our office and deadlines! I tell people that if we sit in the house and worry, it is homework. If we sit in the office and worry, it is work and if we sit on the beach and worry, it is vacation! The mind is the same, only the location is different. How can we change the mental state by changing the place? We are engaged all the time in changing the status, not the state.

We need to change the state, not the status. When we begin to change the state, we work with the projector and make progress, but changing our status is like working with the screen. Changing our wife, house or car is like working with the screen and it does not help us. Changing our mind and therefore our fantasies is the only way.

When we don't pass judgment on others, we reach the state of acceptance, the state of compassion. When intelligence happens, we reach the stage of acceptance. Acceptance is the first step and not the final step. When we welcome people and situations, compassion happens. *Beloved* means being loved, not 'body love.'

What is the difference between intellect and intelligence? Intellect is always prejudiced. Intelligence is always fresh. When we pass judgment and collect evidence to substantiate our decision, it is intellect. When we first collect evidence and pass judgment without bias or prejudice, it is intelligence.

In fact, this is a true scientific attitude: We need the urge to know the truth, the perseverance to gather data and the courage to follow the conclusion. Patanjali's Yoga Sutras is an excellent example of a true scientist's research report. We need to embody these values to do justice to the scientific attitude.

Many people do not have the courage to follow their results. Galileo declared that the earth goes around the sun, which challenged the widely held Christian belief of a heliocentric world. He was persecuted. In his writings, he added the footnote, 'We as Christians can deny this but since the earth and sun are not Christians, they will continue to move the way they do.'

So even from the scientific perspective, we need to analyze data with an unbiased perception before we conclude, before we judge.

Ninety nine percent of the time we make the judgment and collect arguments to substantiate our judgment.

Look at your life and see how your mind works. How do you act in your daily life? The vast majority of the time, your judgment is ready. For example, your son comes home late by a few hours. You make a judgment about him. You will not accept any of his explanations. They can't shake your judgment. On the contrary, you pick arguments to support your decision. After that incident, whatever he does, you will be biased by your previous judgment.

Similarly, after living with your wife for a few months, you create a concept about her. Then, whatever she does, you pick only those arguments that are necessary for your already formed judgment.

Whenever we try to live for our judgment, our ego, and our decisions, we make our life miserable. And we make the lives of others miserable also. Most of the time others do not create the miseries we face. Just to prove our ego, we create them. We may not even derive any benefits from them.

Whenever we think too much of ourselves, we believe only in our judgments and lay the blame on others. When we understand that we are simple beings, we start seeing the arguments clearly before passing judgment. We start making decisions in our lives in the right way and our relationships with others also change.

Most of the time, when we are attracted to a person of the opposite sex, we say it is love. If it is someone else's emotion, we call it lust. Or when we become angry, we say it is for the other person's good. Yet, if others become angry with us, we say they have ego.

People boast about their deeds to me but quickly add that they are only informing me and not boasting. When others boast, we say it is ego. But we justify when we say the same thing by calling it information. We use different arguments for others. We put on one set of lens when we look at the world and another set when we look at ourselves.

Actually, we have forgotten how to relate through the heart, the intense way of relating. Our relationships have become superficial. We don't really know the meaning of the term, 'falling in love'.

Whenever Ramakrishna worshipped, did *pūjā*, he felt that Devi was present. He never felt that the statue was a stone. He felt the presence of Devi. When we deeply fall in love, even a stone can become God and guide us. When we don't feel connected, even if God comes down, we will ask for His business card! If we strongly feel connected, if we know how to open ourselves, a stone can become God and guide us. That is what happened to Ramakrishna. He spoke to Kali Devi. He talked to Devi directly.

Let me tell a beautiful story that happened in Ramakrishna's life:

Ramakrishna was the priest in the Devi temple. He used to taste the food before offering it to Devi. All the temple authorities told him, 'No! You cannot do this. That is sacrilegious.' Ramakrishna said, 'I don't know all these things. I feel that She is my mother. How can I offer the food unless I know that it tastes good? And if you don't want me to offer, I will stand outside and offer. But, I will offer.'

They agreed, 'Alright, do whatever you want.' Not only that, when he decorated the idol of Devi, he placed a small thread near Her nose to see whether She was breathing or not, whether She was alive or not. And the story says, the thread moved due to Devi's breath. He felt Devi everywhere.

There is another beautiful story you should know and this is the solid truth. Please understand: It is the truth.

In Bengal, devotees adorned the wrists of Devi with bangles made out of conch shell in the Dakshineswar temple. Devi Kali has four hands: Two are '*abhaya hasta*' and '*varada hasta*' - 'protecting hand' and 'providing hand' respectively. In the third hand, She holds the *khadga*, sword. In the fourth hand, She holds the *munda*, the head of a demon that represents the human ego.

Actually, this is a philosophical representation. It means: By cutting our ego with the sword of knowledge, She protects and takes care of us.

In three of the hands of this Devi statue, it is easy to put a bangle on. In the hand that holds the sword, the sword can be removed and the bangle can be slid in. In the protecting and giving hands, the bangle can be slid in. However, the fourth hand of Devi holds the head of the demon. In that hand, we cannot put the conch bangle over the demon's head nor can we remove the head and slide it in.

One day a devotee brought four bangles for Devi. Within half an hour, Ramakrishna somehow decorated each of Devi's wrists with one of the four

bangles. Even though it was physically impossible, Devi's fourth hand was now wearing a bangle! Neither was the statue's hand broken nor was the bangle broken.

The devotee was surprised, shocked. This incident is mentioned in the reminiscences of Ramakrishna, written in original Bengali by the close devotees, the householder disciples of Ramakrishna.

The devotee asked, 'Swamiji, how did you put the bangle on Devi? Did you break it and paste it?' Ramakrishna said, 'No.'

The devotee asked curiously, 'Did you break the statue?' Ramakrishna said, 'No.'

The statue is made of black marble. Neither was the stone statue broken nor was the bangle broken but the bangle was on the hand of Devi! The devotee was shocked. He asked, 'How did you do it?'

Ramakrishna asked, 'What is the problem? I told *Ma* (mother), 'Mother, drop the head for a few minutes. She dropped the head. I put the bangle on. I gave her the head back. She started holding it again; that's all!'

Please understand: If you visit Dakshineswar, Calcutta, please don't miss seeing that bangle. That bangle is still there. Somehow, by divine grace, I had the chance to go into the sanctum sanctorum and I saw the bangle at close quarters. Still, it is a mystery as to how Ramakrishna put on the bangle. One thing is sure: Neither the statue nor the bangle was broken.

The energy is such that even stone can respond! We should never think that the deity in the temple is stone. It is *arcāvatāra*: descent of the Divine into the Deity for the purpose of worship. Never think it is stone. It can straightaway respond to us.

Honestly, when I first read that reminiscence, I did not believe it. I was a strong intellect before enlightenment. I am the kind of person who never believes easily. I never trust anything. I prefer to verify and do cross-checking. I thought, 'One more story. Alright, leave it.'

In North India, we can go inside the sanctum sanctorum. Even in Kasi, in the Vishwanath temple, we can touch the Vishwanath deity and make offerings. There is only one condition: We must first take a bath and then enter the sanctum. When I went to the Kali temple, the priest took me inside. I touched the bangle and rotated it. The bangle is made of conch-shell and it rotates. Neither was there a cut nor was the statue broken. It is still a mystery!

Be very clear: When we feel connected, when we know how to open ourselves, when we know how to surrender, even stone can become God and guide us. When we don't know how to open, how to surrender, even if God comes, we will ask for His identity card. We will be unable to relate with Him.

Now all we need is the mood of being deeply in love with Krishna, deeply connected to Krishna, deeply related to Krishna. If we can open ourselves to Krishna when He describes His glories, it will not be words. We will feel it.

First, Krishna removed the enmity between *jivātma* (Self) and *paramātma* (supreme Self). Arjuna is the *jivātma*. Krishna is the *paramātma*.

We may not be aware but we continuously maintain enmity with *paramātma*, Existence. That is why we suspect life. We have fear about what will happen in the next moment. We are afraid of life because we don't believe what is going to happen the next moment. We don't trust Existence.

All life insurance policies are only because we don't trust Existence. Understand that life insurance is not life insurance. It is death insurance. Real life insurance is devotion to the ultimate. Understanding that Existence is taking care of us is the real life insurance. It is the only life insurance. All other things are death insurance that goes to our families who are waiting for it! So that is not life insurance. That is death insurance.

A small story:

A young child was playing on the beach. He wanted to wade into the ocean. His mother ran after him and said, 'Don't go into the ocean. Play in the sand. Don't go into the water.'

The boy asked, 'Why? Daddy is going into the water. Why are you not stopping him? You are stopping me.' The mother said, 'He is insured!'

So please be very clear: All our insurance is death insurance. It is not life insurance. Understanding that Existence is taking care of us and that it is not our enemy is the only life insurance we need.

One more thing: When we have the deep love - the connection with Existence, even when we die, we know that He knows where to keep us. We will be utterly relaxed. Even after death, we know He will protect and guide us. So now itself, our mind should be prepared to fall in tune with this energy; to obey, to surrender to the ultimate will. Now itself, our body and mind should be prepared.

If we live life fighting with Existence, our life will be hell. Nothing else can be done. All we need to do is know how to feel connected.

First, Krishna removes the enmity between the individual Self and Existence. Now, He explains the glory of Existence. Next, He gives the experience that the individual Self and the supreme Self are the same.

Step-by-step, He leads Arjuna from *viśiṣṭādvaita* (a school of thought which says that the individual self is a part of Existence, with its own attributes) to *dvaita* (duality - a school of thought which says that the individual self is separate from Existence), to *advaita* (non-duality - a school of thought which says that the individual self is an integral part of Existence), to beyond *advaita* to *anubhūti*, experience. He leads Arjuna to a spiritual experience step-by-step. I spoke earlier about the three essential identities in our lives. These are: *jīva* - individual Self; *jagat* - the world in which this Self lives, and *īśvara* - Creator of *jīva* and *jagat*, or in other words God.

Initially we see these three as separate entities, just as the water drop sees itself as separate from the ocean. There are different approaches in Hindu philosophy as to how the individual Self can reach the Creator, the Divine. The concepts of *viśiṣṭādvaita* and *dvaita* are based on a separation between the Self and the Creator, with deep devotion connecting the two. Devotion leads the Self to the Divine and an understanding of the Divine. Yet they remain separate. It is like the water drop realizing it is part of the ocean and yet separate.

Advaita philosophy integrates the Self and the Creator into one non-dual entity, of which *jagat*, the world, forms a part. So the three seemingly separate entities merge into one. *Advaita* says that separation is an illusion, *māyā*, and that true realization of the non-dual aspect of the Self and the Divine leads to liberation and enlightenment. These are different ways of looking at the same situation. None of them is wrong.

Krishna leads Arjuna from the concept of separation into the understanding of integration. Krishna makes Arjuna understand that nothing stands between him and Krishna, except his level of understanding.

Please be very clear: These are not contradictory. Many people ask me, 'Swamiji, is *dvaita* or *advaita* right? Is *viśiṣṭādvaita* or *dvaita* right?' They are not contradictory. They complement each other. They lead us step-by-step to more and more understanding. They lead us step-by-step to the ultimate spiritual experience.

In India, this clash between *advaita* and *dvaita* is a big fight. Is the Shankara *bhaṣya* (Sankara's commentary) big or is Ramanuja *bhaṣya* big? Sankara was the

founder of *advaita* philosophy and Ramanuja founded the *dvaita* philosophy. The problem is that supporters of these scriptures have not studied either of them deeply. If we study deeply, we will understand that they say the same thing in different languages.

All enlightened masters speak the same thing in different ways. If we surrender, we will have the same experience of *advaita-anubhav*, non-duality experience. If we achieve the non-duality experience, we will have deep surrender.

The man who has achieved *advaita-anubhava* has tremendous devotion. For example, the verse of Shankara says:

*bhaja govindam bhaja govindam
govindam bhaja mūḍhamate
samprāpte sannihite kāle
nahi nahi rakṣati ḍukṛñkaraṇe*

Shankara says, 'Oh Fool! May you start meditating on Govinda (God) now. May you start remembering Govinda now. *Nahi nahi rakṣati ḍukṛñkaraṇe* means: When *Yamadharma*, the Lord of death comes, intellectual knowledge will not help you. Your intellectual knowledge will not guide you.

A great *advaita-jñāni*, sage of non-duality experience, will be a great devotee. And a great devotee will be an *advaita-jñāni*! Both are one and the same. Only those who have not realized the experience argue.

Ramakrishna tells this beautiful story:

Four people approach a water tank. One person says, 'I am going to drink *tanneer*, meaning water in Tamil. The other person says, 'No! In that tank, there is only water. *Tanneer* is not there.' The third person says, 'No, I am going to drink *paani* (water in Hindi).' The fourth person says, 'I am going to drink *neeru* (water in Kannada).'

One person says, 'No, my grandfather told me that there is only water.' The other person says, 'My grandfather constructed this tank. He says it is *tanneer*.' Another person says, 'My grandfather has all the knowledge. He said it is *neeru*.'

The four people start fighting without even going near the tank, without seeing the tank, before ever reaching the tank. They kill each other and die.

If they had had enough patience to peer into the tank, they would have understood that the four words mean the same. What they meant by water, *tanneer*,

paani and *neeru* are one and the same. However, these people did not have that much patience.

If we experience it, we will understand that Ramanuja, Sankara, Buddha and Madhvacharya are all one and the same in their experience.

A small story:

A *Vedānta* bookstall at a book-fair was selling the Brahmasutra Sankara bhashya and the Ramanuja bhashya. An elderly *pundit*, a scholar well read in the scriptures, stopped by and saw one volunteer standing in the store.

He wondered how much knowledge of these books this salesman had. He asked the volunteer, 'Do you know the difference between Shankara bhashya and Ramanuja bhashya?'

The volunteer replied, 'Forty-five rupees, sir!'

All he knew was the price and not what was inside those books! To him the difference was a dollar.

If you go inside *dvaita* and *advaita* philosophies, both show the same knowledge, wisdom and experience. All we need to know is how to open ourselves and surrender to this Existence. Then we will experience at the level of our being that Existence is taking care of us. Please be very clear: If Existence doesn't want us here, we cannot be here even for a single moment. Even for a single moment, we cannot be here. There is no reason for Existence to keep us alive. If it is keeping us alive, we are wanted. We are wanted in this form, in this way, in this place. That is why we are still alive.

God continuously cleans all the garbage. He never waits. Everyday He clears away all the old things. He is the perfect energy that maintains cleanliness. They say that cleanliness is next to Godliness. I say that cleanliness *is* Godliness. It is not next to Godliness.

Unless we are needed, we will not be kept alive. Just by being alive, He proves that we are needed. We are wanted. We are not an accident. We are an incident. Don't think that we are alive as an accident. We are an incident. When we understand that we are an incident, we feel deeply connected. We open ourselves to Existence.

I tell people: Trust, even if you are exploited. You may say, 'What is this, *Swamiji*? What kind of teaching are you giving? You are asking us to trust even if we are exploited.'

Be very clear: There are two kinds of lives. One is living completely with trust and the other is living completely with an insecure feeling. The person who lives in insecurity may have more wealth. He may have two or three more sofa sets, two or three more beds, a little bigger house, yet he can never rest. The person who lives with the insecure consciousness may have more comfort but he will never be blissful.

On the other hand, the person who lives with deep trust in Existence may have less comfort but he never misses that comfort. People who trust Existence are always showered with blessings. They will live like God on planet earth. They will live like a flower on planet earth. They will be a blessing for the whole planet. The earth is alive because of a few people who live radiating this trust, who live radiating the divine grace.

In Genesis, God says to Abraham, 'If ten good people are found in a country, I will not destroy that land.' India has been invaded so many times. Yet the culture is alive. It exists in spite of the invasions, in spite of all the trouble. Nobody can shake it. Nobody can touch it because it continuously produces enlightened masters! As long as India produces enlightened masters and supplies them to the world, it will not be destroyed.

You see, each country contributes something to humanity. For example, the western society contributes to the social structure. They work with so many different social structures. Germans contribute to the medical field. They have done so much research in medicine. The Japanese contribute to the field of technology. The Chinese contribute to the level of production. In some way or the other, every nation contributes.

India contributes by creating enlightened masters! For anything else, we can go to other countries. For spirituality, we must turn towards India. All the great spiritual cultures were born and nurtured in India. All the spiritual cultures have had their basis and inspiration from India.

We should trust, even if we are exploited. Even if we are exploited, when we live with trust, we live like god on planet earth. After all, we are going to live on this earth for a maximum of seventy to eighty years. In those seventy to eighty years, why should we continuously torture others and ourselves? When we live with an insecure consciousness, we torture others and ourselves.

One more thing that is important for us to know is: If we defend ourselves because of our insecurity, we will not only offend others but we will also miss the joy of living on planet earth. If we trust even if we are exploited, how much will we lose? All that we possess is nothing more than a sand castle.

According to the Hindu mythological stories, Vyasa lived longer than any other man. Someone asked why he didn't build a house. Vyasa replied, 'After all, I am only going to live for a few years. Why should I build a house? Why waste my time?'

A Zen koan says, 'Children build sandcastles on the beach until the evening. Before they go back home, they simply destroy them without a care.' However, we build castles with costly things, and we are so serious about it; that is the only difference! We take things too seriously. Children have intelligence, not seriousness.

If we can, let us live with the completely relaxed mood of deep trust. Then our life will be like a flower. Our presence will be a blessing. Our existence will save planet earth. No matter what crosses our path, we will just be living and enjoying. It is a blessing.

What have we brought here to lose? Our insecure consciousness is nothing but ignorance of the truth. What are we going to carry with us after death? Nothing! A simple truth: Neither have we brought anything nor are we going to take back anything.

While we are here we can relax and trust that Existence will provide for us. If the energy moving inside our body can convert bread into blood, can't it bring bread to us? Just to convert bread into blood mechanically, it has been experimented that we need an industry that measures three miles in length. Yet, the whole process happens inside our body without our conscious effort.

Our brain receives information, analyzes, understands and responds. This entire process that is happening inside our brain would need a computer atleast three stories high that would create a sound equal to at least ten generators!

When people tell me, '*Swamiji*, my mind is too noisy, I don't feel the silence or peace,' I tell them, 'For the amount of work done by your mind, it is very silent! Never think it is noisy.'

The big problem is that we don't trust our energy. We don't trust the cosmic energy. When it can convert bread into blood, can't it help us with our small things? Can't it give us the intelligence to bring bread, sustenance into our lives? It can guide us. It can give us enough intelligence to bring bread for our life. When the energy can move planets and run the whole universe, can't it take care of us?

Let me narrate to you a real incident:

Sharada Devi, the wife of Ramakrishna, opened a charitable hospital in Calcutta. There were two counters: one counter where medicines were given

free for the poor and another counter for people who could afford to buy medicines.

One employee of the hospital complained to Sharada Devi, 'Mother, even rich people stand in the counter for the poor and take advantage of the free medicines. What should we do about this?'

Sharada Devi replied, 'Don't be concerned. When a rich man stands in the line for the poor, be assured that he is also poor, and give him medicines. Even if he has money, he is a poor man. He has come here as a beggar.'

She makes a beautiful statement, 'Outer wealth doesn't make one rich or poor. It is the inner attitude that matters. If you live with trust, even if you are exploited, even if you lose your comforts of the outer world, you will live like God on this planet earth. You will simply float. You will never merely walk. You will become a divine person.'

J. Krishnamurthi says, 'Trust always does good. Unfortunately, we don't have the patience to allow it to work in our lives. We must allow the seed to sprout and the flower to blossom. However, if we keep watching to see when it will flower and act like a security guard with a weapon in our hand, our very threat will not allow it to flower.'

I am asking you to trust Existence, not based upon my intellectual knowledge but from my personal experience. If you believe me, if you trust my words, when you trust Existence and relax from your tensions, headaches, worries and problems, be sure that you will be taken care of. Miracles will happen in your life. When you put your energy totally on trust, something happens in you. An alchemy takes place in you.

A small story:

Once there was an enlightened master. One day, he went to bathe in the river leaving his shawl on the river bank. His student was passing by. He saw the shawl and thinking that someone might steal it, decided to guard it till its owner returned.

When the master came looking for his shawl, the student asked, '*Swamiji*, under whose care did you leave your shawl? It could have been stolen!'

The master replied, 'I left it under His care who gave you the task of guarding it!'

Understand, when you surrender, there is utter relaxation in you and your responsibilities are shifted to a higher authority. This is **surrender**. Do your duty and leave all of the responsibility to Existence. She will take care!

So we have two choices: We can live offending and defending continuously. Even if we have comfort, our being will carry a wound. Or we can lead a totally relaxed life with utter freedom and complete trust in Existence. We can have physical, mental, emotional and psychological freedom. We can have liberation here and now.

The moment we live with trust, we are liberated. Nothing hurts us anymore. If we live with the truth, we beautifully live even our death because we trust that Existence will take care of us even then. If we live without trust, we will be killed by the fear of death. Every moment, we will be dying. With trust, even in our death, we will be living, celebrating!

Here, if we can relax and feel deeply connected to what Krishna says, we will experience the state that Krishna expresses when He tells us about His glories.

Q: Swamiji, you have spoken of surrender. Is it the same as renunciation?

It is and it isn't. Surrender includes renunciation, but is more than renunciation. It is what happens with true renunciation.

Renunciation is the surrender or giving up the outcome of one's thoughts, words and actions. You continue to do what you must do. You do not lapse into inaction or laziness. You are no longer concerned about results. You are not attached to the outcome. You are willing to accept whatever happens.

This is the state where success and failure don't matter since neither defines you. You do not win or lose because neither word has meaning in your life. You act and accept whatever happens. Krishna keeps repeating this throughout the Gita.

As you practice renouncing the outcome of your actions, whether they are related to material benefits, relationships or events, you drop personal attachment to these actions themselves. Your ego drops. When your ego drops, you relate to the fact that you are one with others. You are part of the universal consciousness of which all other beings are a part.

Your integration with the universe is surrender. You no longer have an 'I', an individual identity. This is the ultimate renunciation and surrender.

When a disciple begins to develop the attitude of surrender with a master, it leads him to the state of renunciation. That is why I encourage my disciples to develop surrender first. I have nothing to gain from your surrender. The universe will provide what is needed practically and financially to promote the mission. It is the mission of the universe, not of this six-foot Nithyananda.

When you begin to surrender to the master, you take your first step in dropping your ego. You take the most important step in your life. You take the first baby step towards enlightenment. My concern is only about how you will benefit from this first step.

Once you take this first step towards the master, takes care. The universe takes care.



I Am The Source

10.2 Neither the hosts of deities nor the great sages know My origin, My opulence.

I am the source of the deities and the sages.

10.3 He who knows Me as the unborn, without beginning, and supreme Lord of all the worlds,

Only he who has this clarity is wise and freed from all bondage.

Krishna says, 'Neither the *devatas* (gods) nor the *ṛṣis* know Me.' He means that neither people who work in the line of comforts and luxury nor the people who work in the line of religion and *tapas* (penance) know Him. 'But, I am their origin.'

Whether we live a spiritual or a materialistic life, our root is our consciousness. We should understand an important thing: Whenever Krishna says, 'Me, Me, Me,' He is referring to the enlightened consciousness.

Let me narrate a real incident:

I was invited to a conference by a group of Krishna *bhaktas* (devotees). I can't say devotees as the word devotee is a beautiful word. They were more like fanatics. I went humbly, politely and in a friendly way.

Suddenly, they confronted me and started arguing. They asked me, 'Do you believe in the Gita?' I said, 'Yes, Gita is the ultimate book. I respect it and I worship it.' They questioned me, 'Then why do you worship Shiva?' I was shocked. They asked me, 'You should worship only Krishna. Why are you worshipping Shiva? Why do you put *vibhūti* (holy ash) on your forehead? Why you wear *rudrākṣa* (fruits of *rudrākṣa* tree)?'

I asked them, ‘How does respecting Shiva and wearing *rudrākṣa* contradict respecting and following the Gita?’ They said, ‘No. Krishna says in the Gita, ‘I am everything,’ so how can you worship Shiva?’ I was surprised.

I said, ‘When Krishna says ‘I,’ He means the *Parabrahma svarūpa* (universal Self) of Him. He means the formless consciousness of His being. He represents the universal energy. He doesn’t mean the six-foot form with the flute and peacock feather. The form is beautiful as long as it leads you to the formless.’ If He means the six-foot form, how could He say that He taught this knowledge to Vivaswan? He says, ‘I gave this knowledge to Ikshvaku. I gave this wisdom to Surya.’ He says, ‘I gave this knowledge to Ikshvaku. And from there, it came down to Manu.’ He says again and again, it is He who gave this knowledge to these great people who lived thousands of years before Him!

When the Gita was delivered, Krishna was thirty-two years old. If He was speaking about His form, how could He say, ‘I gave this knowledge to Surya. I gave this knowledge to Manu?’ When Krishna says ‘I,’ He means the cosmic consciousness.

Immediately, the people who were arguing asked, ‘How can you say the form and energy are different? When He says ‘I,’ He means the form also.’

I explained, ‘I do not want to disrespect Krishna’s form. When the form represents the energy, the form is also energy, no doubt. But it is not that you cannot worship another form. You don’t have to become a fanatic.’

One person started arguing, ‘How can you say that when Krishna says ‘I,’ He doesn’t mean the form but He means the energy?’ Then, I had to refer to another important scripture, the Anu Gita that was delivered in the Mahabharata after the Bhagavad Gita.

After the war is over, Arjuna asks, ‘Krishna, please tell me whatever You taught me earlier. I remember the essence but I forgot the words because You taught me the whole thing during the war. I have forgotten the words. Please repeat them once more. I want to listen to those great teachings.’

You will be surprised but Krishna says, ‘Arjuna, not only you, I have also forgotten.’ He says:

*na cākhyam tanmayā bhūyastataḥ
bhaktom aśeṣataḥ param hi
brahma rati yoga yuktena tanmayāḥ*

This is in the Mahabharata in *Aśvamedhika Parva*.

Krishna says, 'Arjuna, I can't give the teachings again because they were said in that high spiritual, eternal consciousness. At that time, I was in that high, eternal consciousness. I was radiating My enlightenment. That very enlightenment spoke through Me. The universal consciousness spoke through Me. The universal energy expressed itself through Me. That is why all those teachings came out. I represented the universal energy, the universal consciousness at that moment. Now I cannot give you the same teachings again.'

He says that these things are expressed in that high, eternal consciousness. Please understand that when Krishna says 'I', He means the enlightened energy, the universal consciousness. However Krishna recollected a few things from what He told and delivered what is called the Anu Gita, to Arjuna.

When I quoted this verse, the senior religious *pundits* (scholars) arguing with me said, 'You look young, but you seem to be well read. We cannot argue with you!'

The greatness of *Sanātana Dharma* - the religion of eternal righteousness later called Hinduism - is that it doesn't propagate the religion or produce fanaticism.

Whether you worship Krishna, Christ, Muhammad or Buddha, it does not make a difference. Please continue to worship whomever you believe in and whomever you connect with, that's enough. Be intense in your path. Nothing else needs to be done. There is no need for fanaticism because all forms are representations of the same divine energy.

There is a question here from the audience: 'I am a worshipper of formlessness, the formless energy. Can I become your disciple and follow *dhyāna* (meditation)?'

Only *then* can you become my disciple!

Only if you are the worshipper of the formless, you can become my disciple. There is a strict instruction for my disciples that they should not meditate on my form. If you have done any of our meditation camps, you know. There is a strict instruction: You cannot meditate on my form. You should not meditate on my form.

And be aware, if any guru tells you to meditate on his form, escape from him. You are falling into the net. You are falling into indirect slavery. Never, never, do that. You will slowly get exploited. Spiritual slavery is the worst slavery. Never be caught in that.

The basis of spirituality is that it should lead us to liberation. In spirituality, if we are caught in slavery, then even God cannot save us. Never meditate on my form.

In our healing initiation, the third level program, there is a clear instruction: You cannot meditate on my form. The form will be here today and gone tomorrow. It will disappear tomorrow. How long will forms be here? Forms can never be here forever.

Form is a representation. Understand: It is like the finger pointing to the moon. I am telling you, 'There is the sun. There is the moon!' Instead of looking at the sun or moon, if you catch hold of my finger, you miss what I am showing you! You miss what I represent. When the finger points to the moon, if you catch the finger, you miss the moon.

In the same way, the master represents the divine consciousness. If you catch His form, you miss the Divine. Never be caught in the form. I tell people: Never meditate on my form. If somebody tells you to meditate on his form, be very clear that he is exploiting you. Escape. Save yourself.

All I want you to understand is that when Krishna says 'I', He means the universal consciousness.

In the next verse, He uses the word *mūḍhaḥ*, fool. Again He uses the word 'fool'. He says only someone who is free from all the sins understands Him. Again and again, what does He want to convey? what does He expect as a qualification from us in order to experience Him?

There is one more question: '*Swamiji*, again and again, you say all we need is one simple understanding. Exactly what am I missing? Tell me. I think I have that understanding. I almost feel I am around the corner. Yet, I am unable to experience what Krishna says. What am I missing? Where am I missing? Please tell me.'

As I was telling you, what and where exactly do we lack? The person who asked this question is totally frustrated. He says, 'Everyday at the end of the lecture, you bring everything to the one point that the inner being should be transformed. Exactly what am I lacking? Please tell me.'

Everyday I stop at that subject so that you will ask this question. Now, I can tell exactly where you are lacking. First, the thirst should be created. The quest should be created. Then, the quest should be answered.

When the question becomes a quest, you speak in this language. When the urge becomes urgent, you speak in this language.

A small story:

Once there was a college student who was very weak in Math. She somehow wanted to pass the Math exam. So she went to her Math professor's office. She closed the door and went up to him. She looked deeply into his eyes and said meaningfully, 'I will do anything to pass in this exam... anything.'

The professor also looked deeply into her eyes and asked, 'Will you really do *anything* to pass the exam?'

'Yes,' replied the girl.

'Will you... study?' the professor asked.

Our interest in spirituality is similar to this. Our seeking is only this much. Many seekers are just like window shoppers. Window shopping is just walking along the street and seeing what's there. Many seekers are window shoppers. They go from master to master.

Going from master to master is not wrong. It is perfectly alright. However, not learning from anybody is wrong. Again and again, I tell people, 'Go to all the gardens, but pick flowers and make a beautiful bouquet.'

But what do we do? We don't pick flowers from any garden. That is where the problem starts. A lot of people are just window shoppers. They go around. They don't do anything. They act as if they are seekers. Above all, they want to satisfy themselves that they are seekers. This is hypocrisy.

Either put your whole effort into seeking, or forget it and carry on with life. If you say that you are trying to pick up a book, but you don't pick it up, what does it mean? It is just cheating.

Ramakrishna says beautifully, 'If somebody's hair is burning, will he keep quiet? Will he say, 'I have no time now. I still have many more years. Later on, I can take care?' The moment there is fire on a person's head, he tries to put out the fire. He runs towards water.

Exactly where are we lacking? Because we feel too much ego in our being. When Krishna says He is God, we feel He is egoistic. For example, if I suddenly say, 'I am God,' what will you naturally think? 'This guy has gone crazy and he has too much ego.'

Please understand: When you say the word 'I', the meaning is different from when a master says it. When you say the word 'God', the word is empty for you. When you use the word 'God,' it is just a superficial understanding for you. It has no solid truth behind it. When you say the word 'God', it is some collected thoughts about whatever you have read or heard or whatever you think about God, that's all. It is not a solid truth or experience for you.

Whereas when you say the word 'I' or your name, there is a solid meaning and experience behind that word for you. But when you say 'God', there is no solid meaning behind that word. When it comes to enlightened masters, the word 'I' has no solid meaning. It is vague, superficial. However, the word 'divine' or 'enlightened' or 'God' has a solid meaning. It is their very experience.

Just because you have ego, you think masters have ego and you miss the meaning of their expression, their declaration. If you can, push your ego a little aside and listen to the words of the masters intensely.

I know, I can see how this whole scene of the Gita between Arjuna and Krishna would have happened. After Krishna's teachings Arjuna completely and totally melted in front of Krishna.

Krishna explains, 'Oh my dear! Understand, I am everything. I have come down. I have happened in this body to liberate you.'

Immediately, the man who is centered on fear, says, 'If you are everything, do all these things for me. Alter this world.' If he is centered on greed, he says, 'If you are everything, give me all these boons.'

The moment the master says he is God, the moment Krishna says He is God, if you are centered on greed, you catch him and ask him to give you all the boons. You start begging, 'Give me this, give me that, give me this, and give me that.' You start begging. If you are centered on fear, again, you catch him and say, 'Please protect me from this. Protect me from that.'

The moment we demand, divinity disappears because we have brought in the business consciousness, the business mind. The attitude which exists between the master and us plays a major role in our experiencing Him as divine and our experiencing ourselves as divine.

Many people say, 'Swamiji, if my son is healed, I will give you so much money. If my daughter is healed, I will give you this property.' I start laughing!

First of all, I never asked them for anything. Second, the moment we start bargaining, the whole beauty of the relationship is gone. For healing to happen, a special bridge is necessary. The bridge or a deep connection, a deeply connected feeling is required. A deep love is necessary.

The moment we bring in the business mood, it is over! As soon as we start bargaining, neither can I heal nor can the person being healed receive the energy. The bridge is disconnected. There is no bridge anymore. If that bridge is there, even without seeing me, you can be healed. You don't need to even see me. You don't need to be in my presence.

Continuously, again and again, I receive emails from all over the world, 'Swamiji, you gave me *darśan* (vision) and removed my sufferings. Swamiji, you gave me *darśan* and healed me. Swamiji, you appeared in front of me and answered my question.' Then they ask, 'Swamiji, are you aware of the times when you appear and give *darśan* to us?'

Now, let me tell you clearly, honestly: I do not know when the *darśan* is happening. Let me break the business secret. Let me tell the whole truth as it is. Just because of your trust, deep love and devotion, the cosmic energy guides you by giving *darśan* using this form, that's all. I rent this body to the Divine. Because I disappeared, because my ego disappeared, the Divine uses this form to guide you. Over! Otherwise, it is totally between you and the cosmic energy. I cannot involve myself. I have no say. I cannot appear for any specific person and say, 'He is my favorite!' No! I cannot show favoritism. It is not under my control.

It is between your attitude and the Divine. It is your ability, your attitude to receive, that creates the bridge. Again and again, I tell people: All I can do is, go back and download the information regarding the *darśan* that you had, and tell you what exactly happened when you had the *darśan* and what instruction was given to you. I can go back, download, bring that information and give it to you, that's all. I have no other say over it. I have no control over it.

With all enlightened people, this is what happens. The moment I claim that I gave *darśan*, the whole thing is over. The moment I declare it is I who appeared, the whole thing is over. Then, the Divine will stop using this form.

As long as I am clear that this is not me and it is *Parāsakti*, Existence, using this form, She continues to use this flute to play Her songs. She continues to use this form to carry on with Her mission. She continues to use this form to bless Her devotees.

When I say *Parāsakti*, I mean the cosmic energy. Don't think there is a lady with four hands! It is the cosmic energy. She does Her job using the forms of people who have surrendered their form to Her. Because I vacated, She is lives in my body.

All you need to do is just get out of your system. The Divine will get in. If you get out of your system, the Divine will get in. Again and again, I tell people it is not me who gives the *darśans*. I don't give visions and it is not related to me. I don't even know when exactly it happens.

All I can say is that when you come back and tell me what happened, if you tell the place or date, I can download and see that file. I can search and bring the file back and tell you in a detailed way what exactly happened. Nothing else is in my control.

When you feel connected, you are open. You don't need to see the master. The cosmic energy will guide you. There is no need for His nearness. But when you spoil the relationship, when you bring business into the relationship, nothing can be done. Nothing can be done because the bridge is broken.

I was watching the CNN channel. They were talking about how the New Orleans Bridge had disappeared in a natural disaster. Like biscuit pieces, the bridge crumbled. The bridge is not there! In the same way, the very bridge does not happen between you and the master when business enters. For the bridge to happen, we need the attitude of complete surrender or understanding, feeling deeply connected. Here, by now, Arjuna is almost feeling connected. He has just dropped his fear and greed.

The big problem with the spiritual process is that you will have what you want when you drop the idea of having that. That is where the problem starts. A deep, passive waiting without knowing what is going to happen is passive surrender. That is total surrender. The moment you decide, 'I will wait forever,' things happen.

As long as you are in a hurry, you are agitated. You stop things from happening in you. It is like trying to get the lotus to blossom. What do you do? You open the petals by hand. Will it be a flower? It will never be a lotus flower. The lotus flower blooms by itself when the sun's rays pierce it. Give a little space to yourself so that your being blossoms.

The moment you decide to wait, things start happening. You don't need to wait anymore. You must wait until you decide to wait. The moment you decide to wait, you don't need to wait anymore.

A beautiful story:

Narada, a devotee of Vishnu, was going to *Vaikuṇṭa* (abode of Lord Vishnu). On the way, he saw a yogi sitting in meditation. The yogi asked Narada, 'Oh Narada, please ask Vishnu how long I must wait before I become enlightened?' Narada said, 'Surely I will ask,' and he went on his way.

Next, Narada encountered a man who was jumping and dancing under a tree. He asked Narada, 'Oh Narada, please ask Vishnu when I will have his *darśan*.' Please be very clear, he never asked when he would become enlightened. He asked Narada when he would have Vishnu's *darśan*, His vision. He said, 'Ask Him to grace me. How long should I wait for His grace?' Narada said, 'Surely I will ask, don't worry.'

Narada went to *Vaikuṇṭa* and came back with the replies. The yogi asked him what Vishnu had said. Narada said, 'Vishnu said you must wait four more *janma* (lives) to become enlightened.' The yogi fell into depression, 'Oh, four *janmas*! What will I do?'

The person who was dancing, jumping around asked Narada, 'What did Vishnu say?' Narada said, 'He said you must wait for as many *janmas* as there are leaves on this tree. Then you will have His *darśan*. Only then His grace will fall upon you.'

As soon as he heard this, the man said, 'Oh! He gave me the assurance that He will grace me! That is enough.' He started jumping and dancing again.

The moment he uttered this, there was a stroke of lightning and the Divine descended. The man became enlightened.

So understand, deep patience and the decision to wait is surrender.

Take the life of Buddha as an example. With utmost sincerity he tried to get enlightened with all meditation techniques and spiritual practices. When nothing worked, He relaxed and let go of everything, trusting Existence. That very moment, He became enlightened.

In my life, as long as I was doing meditation, I never became enlightened. As long as I was doing all the practices, penance, I was so agitated. Nothing happened. Actually after my enlightenment, I came to know that because of the penance, I had postponed my enlightenment. To tell you honestly, at the age of twelve, I had become enlightened. I did not know that I had become enlightened. I tried to hold

on to the experience. I tried to possess *nitya ānanda*, eternal bliss. The moment I tried to possess it, it started slipping away, like wet soap.

If you try to catch wet soap, what happens? Naturally, it will slip. Since I tried to catch the experience, it slipped from me. The day I decided ultimately that I would do no more catching, no more fishing, no more casting the net, no more searching, no more seeking, when I decided to relax and wait, it simply happened.

The day you decide to wait, things happen.

Usually, when somebody is blessed and if he is healed, he tells someone else about it. If the second person comes with the attitude of getting healed, he naturally misses the whole game.

If he comes with a fresh mind, healing automatically happens as a by-product. When we want it as the main product, we miss the whole bridge.

Especially when we bring the business approach, like a deal between friends, the whole attitude, the relationship is no more that between guru and disciple. It is like a business relationship. Energy cannot be transmitted in a business relationship.

One more thing: We need courage to stake everything on trust. It is like that moment when a seed must let go of its fears and break to open and become a tree. This is why we call *nirvāṇa* as the last nightmare.

If a dream is too wild, we will wake up! Similarly, when we get a jolt or shock in life, we wake up to enlightenment! Enlightenment happens when there is a sudden shock to our dream state.

Zen monasteries use strange techniques to enlighten a person.

Let me tell you one such story:

A master was walking on the third floor of the monastery. A disciple sincerely asked him for enlightenment. Suddenly, the master turned and pushed him off the third floor. The disciple had total faith in the master. He fell like a flower and got up to dance!

Research says that our body's weight does not cause a heavy landing. When children fall, they do not hurt themselves badly. When a person falls and drowns in a river, the dead body, though filled with water and heavier, floats, whereas a lighter, living person drowns. They infer that it is our ego, our solidness that causes the damage!

A whirling Sufi dancer becomes airborne at moments during his dance, yet he never hurts himself upon landing. Levitation done by yogis is similarly achieved through an egoless state.

The wonder with masters is that there is no failure, ever. Their's is a foolproof system!

A small story:

A *nāga* (Hindu *sanyāsi* who is usually without clothes) was so fond of his master that he would stand behind the master and constantly imitate his hand and body movements. The master did not mind this on account of his sincerity. Once when a discourse was on, the master raised his hand and so did this disciple.

The master turned to the disciple and cut off his hand with a sword. So great was the disciple's devotion that along with his severed hand, his ego fell and he became enlightened! The other disciples asked the master if this was not too high a price to pay for enlightenment.

The master replied, 'Compared to the number of lives people must take to achieve this state, this is a small price indeed!'

We need the energy to let go, to allow the transformation to happen. Like the seed that lets go of its fear in becoming a tree, we too must have the energy to let go, to allow the transformation to happen.

Christian theology calls the last moment 'the dark night of the soul.' Buddhists use the term 'the last nightmare'. In that moment, when our ego is dying, we must be willing to let go of the past. Enlightenment never happens as a continuity of something. It happens in a flash, as a new birth.

In Sanskrit we call it *viśāda*. The first chapter of the Gita is *Arjuna Viśāda Yoga*. Arjuna's dilemma was so great, yet he was willing to trust Krishna and let go. In such a situation, no mental decision taken is correct and when the master guides you, you must be ready to let go and follow what he says completely, implicitly.

Arjuna had the courage to believe totally in Krishna and let go, which was why he had the *vishvarūpa darśan*, the cosmic vision of Krishna. We must have the energy to let go, to allow the dark night to happen to us. Only if we have trust in the master can the ultimate gain happen to us.

The master George Gurdjieff had strange techniques to enlighten disciples. He had a rule that anybody engaged in any activity, on hearing his cry, 'Stop!' should

immediately stop whatever they may be doing, sit down and meditate. He had a stream inside his ashram. Once three disciples were in the stream when he cried 'Stop!' However, no sooner than he had cried out, the water in the stream began to rise. Frightened, two of the disciples rushed out of the water. The third continued to meditate. His ego drowned with his body and a new being floated.

We need to trust in order to experience the unknown space. At that moment, we have only the master to hold onto. We must accept the new experience happening to us, and deeply trust that the energy to transcend our old personality is entering us.

Krishna emphasizes the feeling of connectedness. Feeling deeply connected to the master is the basic need to understand this truth. That is why the east gave so much importance to the guru, the master.

There is one more question here:

Q: 'Respected Swamiji, I have received dīkṣa (initiation) from my guru and know the relationship of guru and disciple. My guru took samādhi (left the body) in 1952. I gathered all his teachings and am trying to apply them. I never saw my guru in person. Now, since I listen to your discourses everyday, I have experienced that Lord Krishna is talking directly to me from the Bhagavad Gita and it is a beautiful experience. I do not want to let it go. I have the fear that I am greedy and not sure whether I can have two gurus in my life.'

Ramakrishna answers this question. You can have as many gurus as possible. I tell my disciples whom I initiate, 'Not only do I allow you to go wherever you want to go to learn, I also encourage you to learn from wherever you want. Pick flowers from all the gardens and make a beautiful bouquet.'

One more thing: even if our ego is beaten from one thousand sides, it will not die. How can you expect your ego to be killed by one person? May you learn from all sides. Let your ego be crushed from all sides. All you need in order to experience the truth is growth. Wherever you can experience, don't miss it. Wherever you get the chance, take it.

And be very clear: Don't go to a person who says, 'Don't go to others.' Safeguard your freedom. Preserve your freedom. Other than that, you are completely free to go and learn.

So, you don't need to feel guilty. You don't need to feel you are doing something wrong if you listen to his teachings or practice my teachings. I can be sure I won't have any problem with your master. And after all he has passed away.

I will talk to him directly now! Don't bother about it! You need not worry about it! Relax and enjoy.

When we feel deeply connected, the connectivity is enough. Nothing else is necessary. That itself can guide us.

One more important thing: Please understand, to whom we feel connected is not important. To whom we surrender is not important. I can tell you one more business secret, in the same way that Krishna says *rājavidyā rāja guhyam*, secret of secrets. Let me tell these business secrets that nobody usually reveals because the whole business is built on these secrets. But I am very clear, 'let me tell you the whole thing.'

Please understand that to whom we surrender is unimportant. The attitude of surrender, the attitude of feeling connected is what liberates us. That is enough. It will liberate us! Nothing else is necessary. The very intensity has power. The attitude of surrender has the power to transform our life. Nothing else is required.

A small story:

A person who faced a lot of trouble in life felt that he had had enough. He ran away to the forest to find an enlightened guru to help him achieve liberation. He searched day and night but was unable to find anybody.

Then he decided, 'Whomsoever I first meet on this road, I will accept him as my guru. I will follow his instructions. Oh God, I know you are here. Send me the proper person to guide me.' He sat down and waited patiently for someone to come along.

After two days a thief came running on that road in the evening. The man caught hold of the thief's feet and said, 'Oh master, please save me. You are my God. You are my guru. Please instruct me on how to become enlightened.'

The thief said, 'What is this? What is happening?' He said, 'Let me go! Let me go. I am a thief. I must escape. The police are chasing me! Let me go. I must run away.' The man said, 'No! You are my God. You are my guru. You must instruct and guide me on the path of enlightenment.'

The thief said, 'Fool! Don't you see I have stolen all this jewelry? Let me go, otherwise, I will kill you. I can kill you right now. But if I kill you, I must spend ten minutes. By that time, the police will have caught me. I don't have ten minutes. Otherwise, I would have killed you by now.'

The man said, 'I don't know about all that. You are my guru. Teach me.' The thief said, 'Alright. You say I am your guru. Then listen to me. Will you do whatever I say?' The disciple said, 'Yes, surely. I am here for that.'

The thief said, 'Sit.' He sat down. The thief said, 'Close your eyes.' He closed his eyes. The thief gave the instruction, 'Don't open your eyes until I return and tell you to open your eyes.' The man sat with all sincerity and closed his eyes. The thief escaped. The man continued sitting for hours. Slowly, days passed. Then a week passed. A month passed by. The man sat without food or water, absolutely still.

Shiva observed the depth of his sincerity and suddenly appeared to give him *darśan* and enlightenment!

This may look like a story. Yet, there is a beautiful meaning and truth behind it. Please understand that sincerity is enough. Nothing else is needed.

The feeling of connectedness is enough. You may ask, 'How should we feel the connectedness, *Swamiji*?'

The very boiling in you that you want to feel it, is enough. The very boiling, the very quest that you want to feel it, that intensity is enough. You will start feeling it.

The very intensity has the power to create that in you. Nothing else is necessary. All I am trying to do through these Gita lectures is one thing: creating that fire in you, that's all.

Automatically, you will search for the solution. All I do through this program or our meditation camps is give a taste or one glimpse. Then, you will run after it. Then, we don't need to do anything. All I do is to give you deep inspiration, converting your questions into quest, transforming your questions into quest and creating a deep thirst.

Q: *Swamiji, you say it is okay to follow other masters and it is like picking beautiful flowers to make a garland. But what if the result is comparison between one master and another as a continuous process? One will end up nowhere.*

Each seeker of truth has a path. It may be *jñāna* - knowledge, *bhakti* - devotion or *karma* - action. Each seeker must experiment to find out which path is suitable for him, which path attracts him, and then choose his guru.

In the initial stage, while you are in search of the right master, it is useful to search, experiment and verify. It may be comparison or not necessarily also. Each master expresses himself differently and so you can make a bouquet out of the truth you gather from different masters.

However, at some point it is necessary to decide on a path and a master who can appropriately guide you in that path. As long as you are just gathering knowledge, you do not need a master. Reading books and various scriptures is enough. You do not need the guidance of a living master if you do not plan to internalize and imbibe within you what you are adding as knowledge. But the knowledge stops at the head and does not touch the heart and the being.

If you wish to move deeper into the path of Self-realization, you need to be touched in your heart and being. You need to be touched by a master. Only an enlightened master can pass on the ultimate experience that he has had to you. Then, you experience a quantum jump. But to decide to move into the path to this extent, your questions must turn into a quest and your urge must become urgent. When and if you reach this stage, you automatically choose one master in preference to another!

It is actually a match. Only the right master can evoke the right chemical response in your body-mind system. Only the right master can create the head, heart and being level connection with you. At that stage, if you decide on the master and the master accepts you as his disciple, you enter into a serious relationship. The master initiates you and takes responsibility for your spiritual growth in return for your acceptance of him as your master.

Please understand that this is a serious matter. It is not trivial. That is why I insist on at least a year of cooling off period when people want to become my disciples and stay in the ashram. The work that the master does on you is spiritual surgery. It is no less painful than physical surgery. Here you do not have anesthesia. It is surgery of your ego. For example, you may feel that because I accepted you as my disciple and allowed you into the ashram, I need to give you my attention. But I may not look at you for weeks. I may not speak to you. I may put you in 'silence' for weeks.

Disciples who have gone through this process know how difficult it is. It is not an easy game. Many run away from the surgery. They would never have expected it would be the way it is. They do not know that dropping their ego, their identity and their need for attention, are essential before they can move forward in their spiritual path. Some who run away go to other masters whom they think may be

more kind, more loving. If the master is a real master and the right master for them, the cycle just repeats, because that is where the person needs to truly transform!

So then, it becomes a cycle of guru-hopping, just like hopping from one bar to another or one club to another in search of greater pleasures. You will not get anywhere with this hopping. You will be wasting your time and that of the masters.

People like this also use one master against another. They list what they understand as the good and bad points of each and write books. All those who spend three weeks each in different ashrams and write books, belong to this variety. Their purpose is to make money and create a name. They are not really looking for spiritual progress. I don't choose to be part of this game. This mission is a serious affair.

While I do encourage you to search and gather knowledge, I suggest you do that until you decide to commit to the spiritual path seriously. At that point, choose a master, get accepted and stay with that master. There are hundreds of enlightened masters on this planet. There is no shortage of genuine masters. There is only a shortage of sincere disciples!

When you go to another master or ashram, please do not wear my *mala* and talk about my mission or me. That is an insult to that master and to me. You will only create confusion amongst his disciples. Similarly, I request that you not talk about that master's teachings when you are in our ashram because that will confuse those who are here and who are still in their tentative steps.

A real life incident between Ramakrishna and Vivekananda:

Vivekananda was a brilliant *advaita* (non-duality) philosopher. He had no interest in the path of devotion. Ramakrishna realized that the path of non-duality was best suited for Vivekananda and encouraged it.

Ramakrishna was training another disciple in the path of devotion. Vivekananda took it upon himself to convert this disciple to his philosophy of non-duality. Given his brilliant powers of persuasion and authority, Vivekananda was successful in confusing this disciple.

Ramakrishna called Vivekananda, his star pupil and told him that his path was not the same as that disciple's path and that he should not interfere with the disciple's training. Vivekananda obeyed immediately.

This is why I insist that my disciples do not become one another's mentor, no matter how spiritually evolved they may think they are. They can only confuse and mislead. They do not have the capacity to see what a disciple needs and how that disciple needs to be developed.

The spiritual path is actually the rest of your life. You need to experience what life has to offer in terms of pain and pleasure. At some point, you develop the maturity to distinguish between what is good for you and what is not, what makes you happy and what gives you only temporary pleasure. The same maturity happens with your spiritual quest. You need to experience before you can decide, barring those exceptions when the meeting of the beings is instantaneous.



I Create You

10.4,5 Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, control of the senses, control of the mind, happiness, distress, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy, all these qualities of living beings are created by Me alone.

10.6 The seven great sages and before them, the four great Manus, come from Me,

They arose from My mind and all the living beings populating the planet descend from them.

10.7 He who knows all this glory and powers of mine, truly, he is fully united in Me;

Of that there is no doubt.

If you understand this first verse, you can immediately relax. Krishna says, 'Whatever you have, whether you have a good name or a bad name, it is created by Me.' Then be certain that whatever you have is a gift from the Divine.

A small story:

There was once a great sage, Suka. His father, Vyasa, taught him the knowledge of the Truth and sent him to the court of King Janaka. Janaka was an enlightened king and lived in a state of bliss beyond his mind-body state. He was called *videha*, meaning living without and beyond the body.

King Janaka heard that Suka was coming to learn wisdom and made arrangements to receive him. When the boy arrived at the palace gates, the guards hardly noticed him. He was the son of one of the greatest, well-known sages but he sat there for three days and nights. Hardly anybody bothered to look at him or take care of him.

Then the ministers of the king suddenly heard that the son of Vyasa was waiting outside the palace gates and they rushed to receive him. They brought him into the palace with honors, put him in a magnificent room and gave him the best food and comforts.

The face of Suka was serene whether he was treated with utmost honor or he was being made to wait outside the palace gates. Next, he was taken to King Janaka.

The king was sitting on the throne. There was music playing and amusements were going on in his court. Janaka gave the boy Suka a cup filled to the brim with milk and asked him to go around the room seven times without spilling a drop.

The boy took the cup of milk without a word and started walking round the room. In the midst of all the revelry and attractions, he was not distracted the least and effortlessly went round the courtroom seven times. He could not be affected by anything going on in the world unless he chose to let it affect him.

When he brought the cup back, King Janaka said, 'I can only repeat what your father has already taught you and what you learned yourself. You have known the Truth, my boy. Go home.'

Suka was established in the Divine. He knew that everything was the expression of the cosmic consciousness and so his equanimity was never disturbed by how he was treated or by what he had or didn't have.

In the early chapters of the Gita, we see that Arjuna's experience was different from young Suka's. Unlike the boy, Arjuna was confused by what he was thrust into and tried to hide it in lofty words of concern about killing his kinsmen. Of course, Krishna could see right through this and brushed aside Arjuna's arguments. Krishna pointed out that the foolishness Arjuna experienced by torturing himself with his emotional instability was unwarranted. Krishna advised Arjuna to accept the situation and realize the true unattached, unfettered, free nature of his being.

Krishna asks us to accept life as it is. Only when we accept ourselves as we are, can we accept others. Only then we will feel deep friendliness with others. Deep friendliness with others *is* spirituality. Understand that spirituality is honest and deep friendliness with others.

Love is the flowering of our consciousness. Whenever our consciousness expresses itself through the heart, compassion happens, lust becomes love. The touch will become so vibrant, so soothing. I firmly believe that love is the greatest healing

power on planet earth. I tell my healers, 'If you can't spread love, you can never heal.'

When people meet me, I stretch out my hands as soon as I see them. Many feel strange. They feel that spirituality means seriousness and being reserved. Here I am reaching out to people with my stretched hands. It doesn't match the picture of spirituality or the spiritual person that they carry in their heads! According to them spirituality is never associated with sharing or loving.

People from various backgrounds visit our ashram for healing: young and old people, cancer and HIV patients, and people with various other disabilities. If a person has pain in the leg, naturally I get up from my seat and touch their leg to heal. After all the foot is just another part of the body.

An elderly, traditional and conservative *svāmi* gave me friendly advice about this practice. He remarked, 'You are a *svāmi*. It is unbecoming of a *svāmi* to come down from his seat and touch someone's feet. It is against the tradition.' I replied politely, 'The very seat and the cloth which I wear (saffron robes) mean compassion. I acquired this seat because of my compassion. I am not here *for* the seat.'

Spirituality means flowing. Spirituality means spreading love and compassion. Whenever we serve out of compassion, we never feel that we have served. We feel that we have been given an opportunity to serve.

Vivekananda says, 'The hand of the person who gives should be below and the hand of the person who accepts should be above.' In our case, the opposite happens. The giving hand is above and the receiving hand is below. We should be grateful to God that we have been given the opportunity to serve somebody.

That is why Vivekananda replaces the word *seva* - service, with *pūjā* - prayer. The idea of *seva* puts us on a higher pedestal than the one we are serving. With *seva* we are serving Him. In *pūjā*, we are offering, not serving. When compassion happens, we offer. We never serve.

Whether we believe it or not, as of now, we have a deep enmity or hostility towards others. We may smile at others like models posing for the camera. We may smile, but we never feel friendly. We keep a safe distance and play a safe game because we never feel any real friendliness with others.

To correct this, the first thing you need to do is accept yourself as you are. Some people tell me, 'I am unable to accept myself as I am, *Swamiji*. What can I do?' I tell them, 'At least accept that you are unable to accept yourself, that is enough.'

If we accept that we are unable to accept ourselves, it is enough. We will drop from the mind. We need to accept ourselves as we are. Otherwise, if we are unable to accept ourselves as we are, at least accept that we are not able to accept ourselves as we are. That very acceptance will open a new consciousness in us.

Forgiving others and forgiving yourself are one and the same. Jesus says, 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' Unfortunately, we don't even love ourselves. So how can we love others?

When we torture others with our judgment and prejudices, we torture ourselves, too. We use the same sword to kill others and to commit suicide ourselves. The same mind deals with others as well as with us.

When we try to poison others, there will be a deep sense of guilt in us because the same mind is working in our inner space. We use strong words when we are angry. And once the anger dies down, the sharpness that had been emitted outward turns inward to create a deep guilt. The height of the anger and the depth of the guilt are equal. If the height increases, the depth increases as well.

When Krishna says, 'Happiness and distress, birth and death, fear and fearlessness, non-violence and equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, name and fame, fame and infamy, all these various qualities of living beings are created by Me alone,' He means accept your life as it is.

The moment we accept life as it is, we experience divinity in everything. We don't exclude anything. The moment we accept, a cognitive shift happens in us. As of now, the cognitive process happening inside our mind, the cognition agent, is centered on enmity.

The moment we accept ourselves, we accept the whole world. Then, the cognitive shift happens in us. The cognition that happens inside our system will be centered on bliss. Then we experience the whole thing as divine.

Krishna explains His glory. He says, 'I am everything.' He declares, 'I am the universal consciousness. The person who truly knows My glories and powers, engages in *yoga*, the union of individual consciousness with the divine consciousness, and undoubtedly attains liberation.'

The *saptaṛṣis*, the seven sages that Krishna talks about, are not seven old men with flowing beards sitting in meditation and penance, waiting for something to happen. From my experience, this is the energy field that drives this universe. This energy field referred to as the *saptaṛṣis* has the intelligent power to make decisions that determine the course of the universe.

During my *parivrājaka*, wandering days before enlightenment, I lived for several months in Tapovan, beyond Gangotri and Gomukh, in the Himalayan mountain range at a 17,000 feet altitude. Even now, no roads lead to Tapovan and there are no permanent structures to stay in. I lived like many other *sanyāsis*, staying in caves, covering myself with jute cloth and newspaper in the winter and eating whatever fruits were available. Tapovan is referred to as Shambala, heaven on earth. It is the point from which one can move from the material earthly plane up to the spiritual plane.

The *saptaṛṣis* exist as an energy field reachable from Tapovan. Tapovan is the spiritual helipad from where enlightened beings ascend to a higher ethereal non-material plane. Many years later I took a few disciples to Gomukh and showed them Tapovan. I went into deep *samādhi* that night at Gomukh and they were frightened. The next morning I was up before them. I woke them up and said, 'I told the *saptaṛṣis* that I would love to stay on with them. They promptly threw me out!'

Krishna refers to the *saptaṛṣis* as the universal consciousness that was born from His mind, from Him, the Primal Source and Primal Creator. He is the *saptaṛṣis*. His energy decides what enlightened beings should do, and directs their actions. Every movement that I make is governed and decided by this energy.

In Hindu mythology, *Manus* are the children of Brahma, the Creator. There is a lineage of *Manus*, fourteen *Manus*, who populated the earth. Each *Manu* ruled for a period. The collective period of all fourteen *Manus* equals one *kalpa*, one day in the life of Brahma. In Sanskrit, all humans are termed *Mānava*, meaning those descended from *Manu*.

As the universal consciousness, Krishna is all in one. He is the Creator, Sustainer and Rejuvenator. He is Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. He also transcends all three as the *Parabrahman*, the supreme superconsciousness.

One needs to do nothing except understand and accept what Krishna is. The master says that belief and understanding alone liberates us. Nothing more is needed.

Q: Is the principle of Tao, that there is good and bad in everything, being proclaimed by Krishna in these verses?

Tao says that in everything there is a mixture of good and bad. Even this distinction between good and bad is our judgment. It is a product of our minds.

Krishna goes beyond the concept of good and bad. True spirituality does not decide between good and bad. Whatever is, is; that's all. The underlying principle of Tao is also the same. Tao says to accept life as it is, without judging and differentiating.

Life is non-dual. Our perception and conditioning creates duality in everything. Good and bad, ugly and beautiful, success and failure are words we use to describe our responses to what we perceive. That is why what is ugly to one person is beautiful to another. One person's success is another's failure. We compare in relative terms, whereas Nature is absolute.

If we grew up alone on an island, what kind of differences could we make between tall and short or between pretty and ugly? None! There *is* no such difference. We create differences to justify our feelings about ourselves, other people and events. We create these words to express our pains and pleasures, that's all.

I have lived with tribal people who do not even understand the meaning of pain. Their women deliver babies with no fuss. They enter a hut and come out with a baby thirty minutes later! There is no screaming, no midwives and no attention from anyone at all. I asked the elders of that village, 'How do pregnant women cope with the pain of delivery?' They asked me in surprise, 'Pain? What pain?'

I have lived in extremely cold conditions at Tapovan and other places with only this two-piece saffron clothing. I never felt the cold. Harvard Medical School conducted studies on Tibetan Buddhist monks who meditate in the snow with wet towels draped on their bodies. Their body temperature increases and dries the towels. If a normal person's body temperature increased to that extent, he would die of fever.

If we accept nature, we can accept pain and pleasure, heat and cold, as well as good and bad without duality or distinction, and without difficulty. That is what Krishna says and what the Tao teaches.



Experience The Light

10.8 I am the source of all the spiritual and material worlds. Everything arises from Me.

The wise, who know this, are devoted to Me and surrender their heart to Me.

10.9 With mind and lives absorbed on Me, always enlightening one another and talking about My glories, the wise are content and blissful.

10.10 To those who are always engaged in Me with love, I give them enlightenment by which they come to Me.

10.11 Out of compassion to them, I destroy the darkness born out of their ignorance by the shining lamp of knowledge.

Now, instead of understanding these statements of Krishna intellectually, we should try experiencing them. In the deep meditative mood, let us feel connected to the *Parabrahma* Krishna, to our very life source, to our very life energy.

Let us enter into meditation, because all the following verses in this chapter must be experienced. They cannot be understood. There is nothing much to understand.

Later Krishna says, ‘Amongst the ṛṣi, I am Narada. Among the months, I am Margazhi. Among the rivers, I am Ganga. Among the fish, I am Makara.’ He explains His glories at length.

We may think, ‘Why does He explain these things in a detailed way?’ He makes us understand, wherever we see the glory, wherever we see the Divine radiating, there lies the greatness. We realize this is true when we start experiencing, when we deeply understand these basic truths of accepting ourselves and connecting with the universe.

We experience life as divine and a blessing when we understand these things. It happens when we connect with the Divine, when we trust, when we completely

open up, when we don't have other vested interests and when we do not beg for anything from life.

As long as we are begging for things in the hope that, 'with this, I will feel blissful,' or 'with that, I will feel blissful', we will ask only for this or that. Only when we understand, 'I want just Him, nothing else. I want the pure experience of the Divine, nothing else,' we experience the whole of Existence in a totally different way. The cognitive shift starts happening in us.

I can imagine how Arjuna felt when Krishna revealed these things for the first time, inch by inch. 'Oh Arjuna, I am that. I am this. I am everything.' Arjuna may not have said anything, but he surely must have felt that he was expanding.

Understand this example: You and your husband were ordinary people when you were first married. Slowly, your husband entered politics and became a mayor. After five years, he became governor, a well-known person. Already, you feel connected to him since he is your husband. Now, he becomes a famous person or you understand him as a big person. You deeply feel the gratefulness or the gratitude to him because his expansion has helped bring about yours.

In the same way, Arjuna already felt deeply connected to Krishna as his friend. Now, he understands the glories of Krishna. Krishna reveals His glories to Arjuna.

See, when your husband became governor, you also expanded because you are connected to him. You rejoice. A husband's power is a source of joy for wives. For men, money is the source of joy. When the person to whom you are connected expands, you also expand. When he achieves the glory and becomes great, you also become great.

Here, the same thing happens because Arjuna already feels deeply connected to Krishna. When Krishna reveals His glories and expands, Arjuna also expands. He says, 'Oh God! I am a friend of such a great person. I am with such a great person. Oh Krishna, You are a great person. I am your friend. I am deeply connected to You.'

When we deeply feel connected to the master and He expresses His glory, we expand. When the master shows His greatness, you understand. You expand and experience the same greatness.

Here, Arjuna is enjoying the same mood that Krishna enjoys. Inch by inch, Arjuna is enjoying the joy and bliss. Arjuna asks, 'Oh Lord! It is so beautiful. I never feel bored. Please tell me again and again, all of your glories.'

Krishna explains inch by inch. He reveals who He is and how He is shining.

Krishna talks about *līla dhyāna*, meditating on the divine play of the Lord. What the eyes see intensely gets registered in the mind. What gets registered in the mind, the eyes see intensely. When the mind is engaged in the Divine, when the heart is captivated by the Divine, we automatically live every moment remembering the Divine.

Every moment of our life is engaged in remembering the Divine, in the reminiscences of the Divine. Then, our mind and actions naturally reflect this connection with the Divine.

We enjoy talking to each other about the divine glories because all around us, we see these glories. We are so full of divine ecstasy and bliss, so fully satisfied and not wanting anything, because we see life overflowing with divine bliss and glory.

This was the state of the *gopīs*, the legendary girls who tended cattle in Krishna's home Brindavan. They constantly played with Krishna from the time of His infancy. Their entire world revolved around Him. Their minds and hearts were filled with Krishna, with no intellect filtering their emotions.

Vishnu, whose incarnation Krishna is, wanted to teach a lesson to his disciple, Narada. Narada considered himself to be Vishnu's greatest devotee. Vishnu pretended he had a headache. His devotees brought him all kinds of medicines, which he tried and pronounced useless. He told them, 'The only substance that will cure my malaise is the dust from the feet of a true devotee.'

Narada and the great sages were shocked. How could they allow the dust of their feet to fall on their master's head? 'It will be a sacrilege,' they argued. One day Vishnu pretended to become annoyed. He told Narada, 'Get out of My sight. Go to the *gopīs* in Brindavan and tell them what I said and seek a solution.'

When Narada reached Brindavan, the *gopīs* were so busy with their chores that they would not talk to him. Narada explained, 'I have come from *Vaikuṇṭha*.' They were not impressed. He told them, '*Vaikuṇṭha* is the home of Vishnu.' 'Who is Vishnu?' they asked. Narada said, 'Vishnu is Krishna.'

As soon as he uttered the word Krishna, they gathered around Narada and asked him in one voice, 'How is our Krishna, our darling?' Narada said, 'He is suffering from a headache.' They asked, 'What can we do? We cannot let our Krishna suffer.' Narada told them that Vishnu had asked for the dust from the feet of one of his true devotees.

One *gopī* immediately removed her upper cloth. She placed it on the ground and all the *gopīs* danced upon this cloth to collect the dust from their feet. Folding the cloth, not worried that she had nothing covering her breasts, the *gopī* said, 'Here take this to our Krishna. We do not know which of us is his true devotee. So this has all the dust from all our feet. Go now and give it to Him.'

Narada asked, 'Aren't you worried that you are giving Krishna the dust from your feet to put on His head?' In one voice, the *gopīs* answered, 'Are you crazy? He, our Lord and Lover, is suffering and has asked for the dust from our feet. If it would cure Him, we are ready to dance on His head! We shall give our lives for Him.'

Narada, humbled, returned to Vaikunta with the *gopī's* upper cloth filled with dust from their feet. Vishnu took the cloth in His hands, smelled the dust and pronounced Himself fully cured. The sages, *devas* and Narada watched in amazement.

'What did they tell you, Narada?' He asked. 'Did they give useless reasons and advance futile arguments as to why they could not apply the dust from their feet on their Lord and master, as you all did?'

Narada hung his head in shame. Even to this day all main entrance steps to Vishnu temples have the imprint of feet carved upon them. These imprints represent the feet of devotees whose feet dust Vishnu covets more than all the crowns He is adorned with!

With mind and lives absorbed on Me, always enlightening one another and talking about My glories, the wise are content and blissful. To those who are always engaged in Me with love, I give them enlightenment for which they come to Me.

Krishna here talks about *satsang*, the collection of people whose hearts, minds and bodies are immersed in Him. They are the ones who can talk about nothing except Him, who are filled with bliss and love for their Lord and master. He promises He will provide them the intelligence to enlighten them and bring them to Him.

I keep telling my devotees about the importance of *satsangs*. These are regular get togethers where people listen to the master's words, dance to the *kīrtans* and go home with refreshed and reinforced memories of their master. Everyone who

attends *satsangs* regularly can tell you that the master is present with them, wherever they may be, however many *satsangs* there may be at that particular moment.

An ashram is an intensified *satsang* that is forever, twenty-four by seven. That is why I motivate groups of people to form ashrams, spiritual communities, where they can follow their spiritual quest with one-pointed minds. Ashrams are not cults like people in the West fear. Cults can be created whether you have communities or not. Gangs are cults. Do gangsters live in an ashram?

We are eligible to be part of an ashram community when we are deeply in love with our master. The motivation to live in an ashram is neither fear that he will hurt us if we leave, nor greed that he will take us to a non-existent heaven if we stay. Rather, it is love born out of this present moment. We must have shed our entire ego and surrender ourselves to the One who has already surrendered himself. Only then the process works. Otherwise, it is just the blind leading the blind, which is a cult.

Here Krishna talks about such an environment, an ashram. An ashram is not a serious center of penance with old people meditating in painfully distorted postures. Come to one of our ashrams and see for yourself. No one will be serious. They will be laughing all the time. They are not like Narada and the sages engaged in intellectual arrogance. They are the *gopīs* who are in love with their master; with their entire being filled with love for Him.

At the ashram, each one does what he can. No one forces them to do anything. They can sit in meditation with eyes closed for twenty-four hours. No one will bother them. No one will ask them why. No one will complain that they are not doing anything. But the energy of the master provides them with intelligence. It does not allow them to waste themselves in frivolous activities.

A monastery is not an ashram.

There is a hierarchy in a monastery. There is order. There are rules, regulations and norms as to how much work each person must do. An ashram has no man-made rules and regulations. No one measures how much one person does and how much another does. Outwardly there is chaos. There is no equality in terms of responsibility or duties, but there is uniqueness. Each person does what he is best suited for.

In an ashram, one does not work out of fear, greed, motivation or necessity. An ashramite, a resident of an ashram, works out of gratitude. Once we start to measure what people do and start comparing, we create a political organization, not a spiritual organization.

A man who works out of fear and greed is a *sūdra*. The man who works out of attention need is a *vaiśya*. The man who works out of jealousy or comparison to prove that he is superior to others is a *kṣatriya*. The man who works out of gratitude is a *brāhmin*.

These differentiations do not come by birth. They are a result of our *guṇas*, our attributes, our mental make-up, our attitude. They come into our being when we earn and develop them. They cannot happen by birth.

A man cooked for a certain monastery for thirty years. He never bothered to be around the master, nor did he attend the master's discourses regularly. When it was time for the master to leave planet earth, he called everyone to announce the heir to the monastery. Everyone expected someone who was always very close to the master to take that seat. Instead the master said, 'You have all listened to my discourses all these years. However, this cook lived my teachings. He is my successor.' By saying that, he gave the cook the experience of his enlightenment.

People are not equal. Each one comes with his own *karma* (unfulfilled actions) and a particular attitude. As long as the master is there, He takes care of everything. When the master is not there, the whole thing becomes *dharma*, righteousness. When the master is there, everything becomes *mokṣa*, liberation. That is the difference between *dharma* and *mokṣa*. Work for *mokṣa*. That is the difference between an ashram and a monastery.

My mission is for people to live together focused on spiritual evolution; to be self-funded, self-managed and self-sustaining, operating with one mission, that of transformation of oneself through meditation. Soon people will find out how much better this system works compared to their normal lifestyle.

I say to all of them, as Krishna said: *those who are always engaged in Me with love, I give them enlightenment by which they come to Me.*

The master defines Himself in the last verse: *I destroy the darkness of ignorance within them, with the shining lamp of wisdom, through my compassion.*

The Sanskrit word guru, meaning master, has two syllables: *gu* refers to darkness and *ru* to light. The master leads the disciple from darkness into light with compassion. This darkness of ignorance is the identification that one has with one's self, one's material attachments and material possessions. This identification surely leads to sorrow since this attachment is for things that are fleeting and not for something long lasting.

Wealth gets created overnight and disappears just as quickly. Relationships, however sound, last only as long as the body lasts, most often far less since the mind is even more fleeting in holding onto relationships. Nothing that exists in this world, nothing that is of material creation, can last eternally. Our impression that material possessions and attachments last, comes from ignorance. This ignorance is born of self-identity, ego.

The master is the only person who can dispel that darkness. Only He can light up that wisdom within you in order for you to realize that you are already one with Existence and therefore need nothing from this material world.

Your master gains nothing from teaching you. He gains nothing from enlightening you. He does it out of sheer compassion, so that others may experience the same bliss that He constantly experiences.

Q: Swamiji, what about people who cannot live in an ashram? Does this mean they cannot be successful in their spiritual endeavors?

As I said earlier, an ashram is not a monastery. It is not about discipline and bondage. It is about liberation. Therefore, there cannot be any compulsion about someone staying in an ashram as a condition that only if they do, can they evolve spiritually.

Spirituality is about your mind. It is about going beyond your senses and dropping your mind, so that you can focus inwards. Theoretically, you can do this anywhere. But the fact is that this process is easier if it is practiced with and amongst a group of people who share a similar interest and follow the same path.

Like attracts like. When a group of people who are focused on their inner world and teachings of their master gather together and live together, a very high positive energy is created. Your thoughts create your actions. Your thoughts influence other people's thoughts. Other people's thoughts influence yours. So when a group thinks the same way, there is an exponential growth of these thoughts, and the energy created makes things happen.

This is the power of *satsang* and ashram. Shankara says so beautifully in the Bhaja Govindam hymn, that the gathering of like-minded spiritual people leads to non-attachment. The non-attachment leads to absence of desires and illusions. This leads to an unmoving, undisturbed still mind. The stilled mind leads to liberation. This process is logical and scientific.

Living in an ashram does not mean that you do not work and you meditate all the time. In our ashram communities many people hold regular jobs and carry out their business. They are not withdrawn from the material world. They are just detached, that's all.

We are not talking about an impractical community of people who have renounced the world. The ashram community I talk about is for everyone. It is a matter of like-minded people coming together as families and with jobs so that they are mutually influenced towards a common purpose.

When you look for a home to own and live, don't you look for a compatible environment? Don't you check out your neighbors? Don't you make sure that you have good schools and other facilities near by? Why do you do that? You wish to live with people with whom you share a common interest. Man by nature is a social animal.

That is what we do in the ashram environment. We provide the environment for people with a common interest in their spiritual progress through their trust in me, to live together as a community, socially just the same way as people live together in any community. People work and conduct their businesses as they did before. They share common facilities, such as kitchens, to make it easier to spend more time on spiritual matters.

However, there is no compulsion that they must live in an ashram environment. When families find that the ashram culture and environment works better for material and spiritual needs, they choose to adopt this mode of living, that's all.



Know Yourself By Yourself

Arjuna said:

10.12 You are the supreme Truth, supreme sustenance, supreme Purifier, the Primal, Eternal and Glorious Lord.

10.13 All the sages like Narada, Asita, Devala, and Vyasa have explained this.

Now you are personally explaining to me.

10.14 Oh Kesava, I accept all these truths that You have told me.

Oh Lord, neither the gods nor the demons know You.

10.15 Surely, You alone know Yourself by Yourself,

Oh Perfect One, the origin of beings, Oh Lord of beings, Oh God of gods, Oh Lord of the world.

10.16 Only You can describe in detail Your divine glories by which You pervade this universe.

10.17 How may I know You by contemplation?

In which forms should I contemplate on You, Oh Lord?

10.18 Tell me in detail of Your powers and glories, Oh Janardana.

Again, please tell for my satisfaction as I do not tire of hearing Your sweet words.

Arjuna becomes the perfect disciple. He has no doubts about whatever Krishna has said to him so far. It only corroborates what the great sages have said. All that Arjuna seeks is that his Lord and master tells him more about Himself, His glories,

‘I just need to know how I should approach You, how I should see You. Tell me more, I can never tire of listening to Your words.’

Arjuna is in love with His master. When you are in such deep love as Arjuna is now, and as the *gopīs* were with Krishna in Brindavan, there is nothing to be said. There is nothing even to be heard. Whatever Arjuna says is merely to keep his end of the dialogue going. Arjuna knows that there is no need for Krishna to say anything now. Yes, he would be delighted if Krishna were to speak of His glories, His *līla*. However, Arjuna is in such a state of meditation, ready for his ultimate experience, that whatever his master says or does would not matter to him.

Therefore, when Arjuna asks the Lord to talk about His glories that no one else understands, Arjuna is not requesting on his behalf, He is requesting on behalf of humanity. Arjuna would have been perfectly happy to sit in silence, in deep meditation upon Krishna. And in His compassion, Krishna would have eventually revealed Himself to his chosen disciple. However, the rest of humanity would not have benefited from a revelation that came to Arjuna alone. Hence Arjuna requested that Krishna speak about His glory.

Arjuna wants to know about *Parabrahma* Krishna, the ultimate superconscious being. He does not want to know about his friend and charioteer, Vasudeva Krishna, the son of Vasudeva.

Arjuna is in the mood of the perfect devotee and disciple. Anything that he can hear about his master is nectar to his ears. He is in a state of complete immersion.

Ramakrishna asked Vivekananda, ‘If you were a fly and you were on the rim of the cup of nectar, what would you do?’

Vivekananda said, ‘Sip from the cup, of course, what else?’

‘You fool!’ said the master, ‘You should fall into the nectar and submerge yourself! When would you ever get this opportunity again?’

Arjuna is on that verge of immersion. His intellect has almost disappeared. He needs the last nudge, so to speak.

You too, as the reader, make your plea to *Parabrahma* Krishna, the *Jagatguru*, so that He may tell you about His glory, and so that you may meditate upon His glory with single pointed focus of the mind. As He promised, He will provide the light of wisdom for you to be enlightened.

Q: Swamiji, *what is the best way to approach one's master?*

The best way is to drop your mind!

Everything we do in life becomes a business negotiation. Anything that our mind is involved in becomes an activity in which the end result is paramount. We do things with expectation. If we get what we expect, we are happy in that moment. However, it doesn't last. Once one expectation is fulfilled, another sprouts and so on. Of course, when an expectation is not fulfilled, we respond with anger and insults.

This is how we treat the Divine as well. Whether it is a Krishna in Udipi, a Shiva in Tiruvannamalai or a Balaji at Tirupati, as long as our prayers are answered, they are all safe. Otherwise, they are in trouble. Our attitude of begging reduces the Divine to a beggar as well. We offer them a percentage or a commission in order for them to give us what we want from them.

Drop your mind and your expectations in front of the master and the Divine. They have the intelligence as well as the power to respond to your needs. Why do you assume that the Divine or the master has only the power to give you what you seek, and present Him with a laundry list of demands as though He does not have the intelligence to understand what you need?

The master, as with the Divine, has the power to give you what you need and the intelligence to know what you need.

All you need in the master's presence is an open attitude or a no-mind attitude without any preconditions and with complete trust that your needs will be addressed. When you do not receive what you want, please understand that what you want may not be in your best interests.

If you ask my disciples, you will see they have no desire to ask or seek anything either in my presence or even otherwise. There are no expectations. They have absolute conviction that whatever happens will only be good. *Śivatvam* or causeless auspiciousness overflows from the master. There is no need to ask. It just flows. You need only to receive in a state of surrender.

The right attitude towards the master is total surrender. When that surrender happens, you are liberated. The master takes care of your bondages.

The true disciple is in a mode of surrender and gratitude. This is the sign of fulfillment and liberation.



I Am The Beginning, Middle And End

10.19 Krishna said, 'Yes, Oh Kurusreshta, I will talk to you surely of My divine glories;

But only of the main ones as there is no end to the details of My glories.

10.20 I am the Spirit, Oh Gudakesa, situated in all living beings.

I am surely the beginning, middle and end of all beings.

10.21 Of the Aditya, I am Vishnu. Of the luminaries, I am the bright sun.

Of the Marut, I am Marichi. Of the Nakshatras, I am the Moon.

10.22 Of the Veda, I am the Sama Veda. Of the gods, I am Indra.

Of the senses, I am the mind and in living beings, I am the consciousness.

10.23 Of the Rudra, I am Shankara and of the Yaksha and Rakhasa, I am Kubera, god of wealth.

Of the Vasu, I am fire and of the peaks, I am Meru.

10.24 Of the priests, understand, Oh Paartha, that I am the chief Brihaspati.

Of the warriors, I am Skanda. Of the water bodies, I am the ocean.

10.25 Of the great sages, I am Bhrigu. Of the vibrations, I am the OM.

Of the sacrifices, I am the chanting of holy names. Of the immovable objects, I am the Himalayas.

There is no way to describe the Divine fully because the Divine pervades every bit of this entire universe. When it exists in every atom, when it is the essence of all that exists, how can we describe or comprehend it in its entirety?

So Krishna explains the main manifestations that give a glimpse of the unfathomable Divine.

Krishna refers to Arjuna as Gudakesa, meaning one who has conquered sleep! He implies that Arjuna has overcome sleep, signifying darkness or ignorance. Therefore Arjuna is ready to receive what Krishna is about to deliver. Throughout the Gita, Krishna refers to Arjuna by different names. Each one is appropriate within a particular context. Sometimes He calls Arjuna - Kaunteya or Partha, meaning that he is the son of Kunti. Kunti in Mahabharata is the epitome of patience and forbearance. No one suffers like she does. When Krishna addresses Arjuna as the son of Kunti, it is in the context of advising Arjuna to be patient and listen carefully. While addressing Arjuna here as Gudakesa, one who is in the light, having conquered sleep, Krishna readies Arjuna for liberation.

Krishna declares that He is everything that really matters. Krishna says that He is the ultimate consciousness in all beings and He is the beginning, middle and end of all beings. He declares that He pervades the entire space and time and beyond.

Krishna is both the macrocosm and the microcosm: the *Brahmāṇḍa*, cosmos and the *pinḍāṇḍa*, individual being. His energy permeates all living and non-living entities and He decides upon their nature.

Young Prahlad was subjected to an inquisition by his demonic father Hiranyakasipu. His father asked, 'You speak about Narayana all the time and refuse to give up even when I command you to do so. Where does Narayana live? Where is he now?'

Prahlad replied, 'He may be in this twig lying on the floor. He may be in this pillar next to you. He is everywhere.'

Hiranyakasipu kicked the pillar in fury daring Narayana to appear. Narayana appeared in the form of Narasimha, half-man half-lion!

Prahlad trusted fully that Narayana was everywhere. He did not have one iota of doubt about it.

When Prahlad was being challenged by Hiranyakasipu to show Narayana anywhere, it is said that Lord Vishnu (Narayana) suddenly started preparing to leave Vaikunta, His abode, when Lakshmi, His spouse asked, 'Lord, where are you going?' Vishnu smiled and said, 'I have no idea where this devotee of mine, this young boy Prahlad, is planning to call me from. Wherever he calls from, I need to appear from there!'

Not only does the Lord reside everywhere, He will also go to any length to ensure that His true devotee's words don't go futile!

In this universe, there are twelve planes of existence. These are a combination of the factors of length, breadth, depth, time, space and consciousness. At best we are aware of the first five and only partially that too. It is difficult for those in the human plane to comprehend even time and space fully. We can only exist in one aspect of time and space in relationship with the three dimensions of length, breadth and depth.

Quantum Physics now recognizes that fundamental particles can exist simultaneously in different locations at the same time. Matter can transcend time and space. Matter and energy can exist beyond the bounds of time and space.

A master is one who can transcend time and space and reach consciousness. Krishna, the great master, is in the twelfth plane, that of pure consciousness. He is beyond all dimensions, beyond time, and beyond space. He is the beginning and He has no beginning. He is the end and He has no end.

He is the Creator. He is the Created. He is also the Creation. In this huge canvas of the universe, He is the canvas. He is the paint. He is also the strokes and He is the painting. There is nothing that He is not.

The only way to understand even a part of Him is to become immersed in Him.

When great Sufi masters went into ecstasy, they were immersed in that consciousness that pervades everything. When Ramakrishna even heard the name of Mother Kali, he went into ecstasy.

In the Chandogya Upanishad, Aditya is a name of Vishnu in His Vamana *avatāra*. In the ten incarnations of Vishnu, Vamana is the fifth incarnation as a small *brāhmin* boy.

When King Bali of the demon race was performing a series of fire rituals to attain supremacy over the universe, the demigods requested Vishnu to save them from Bali and prevent Bali from conquering the universe.

On King Bali's last fire ritual, Vishnu appeared as a small *brāhmin* boy. The king, as per the custom, respectfully welcomed the *brāhmin* boy and offered to give anything that he wished for. The king's guru, Shukracharya, realized that Vamana was Vishnu disguised in order to foil the plans of the demons to achieve supremacy over the worlds.

He warned Bali. However, the king had to keep his promise. Out of full respect for the *brāhmin*, Bali asked him to take whatever he wanted. Bali angered his guru for honoring the *brāhmin* boy instead of taking his warnings. Vamana asked king Bali to give him three steps of his land as his property. Once Bali consented, Vamana grew from the size of a small boy to a huge figure. He stepped over the entire earth in a single footstep. In the next step, he stepped over the heavens.

Having thus conquered the worlds, Vamana asked Bali where he could place his third step. Having nothing else to offer, Bali offered Vamana his own head. Vamana placed his foot on Bali's head.

The story symbolizes how arrogance and pride leads to one's downfall since all possessions are temporary and of no inherent value. Surrendering only to the Divine, to the ultimate consciousness, leads us to liberation.

Krishna says that among the Maruts, He is Marichi. The Maruts are the thought-gods associated with power and knowledge. Marichi is the father of sage Kashyapa who is the father of the Maruts. Many Rigveda hymns are dedicated to the Maruts. The Maruts aid the activities of Indra, the representation of the mind. This is a metaphysical representation of the power of thoughts that originate from the mind.

A Japanese scientist, Dr. Masaru Emoto has carried out research on the power of thoughts and has proved that thoughts have a tangible effect on material objects. Dr.Emoto took samples of water from the same source, put it in different containers and exposed it to different influences.

To one sample, he spoke positive words of love and gratitude and recited Buddhist chants. Over another, he spoke negative words of anger, hatred and war. Then, he froze the water so that he could photograph its crystalline form.

Beautiful clear crystals, like diamonds, formed in the samples exposed to positive energy. With the samples exposed to negative energies, the crystal structure appeared dark, misshapen and ghost like.

Over three hundred experiments conducted by Emoto to repeatedly prove the effects of words and thoughts on water are described in his best-selling book, *The*

Hidden Messages of Water. When we consider that our bodies are up to ninety percent **water**, imagine the direct effect that our thoughts have on us, on others and the environment!

A common representation of the Maruts in the Rig Veda, is a flock of birds. This symbolizes the power of thoughts that influence the recipient. When a person radiates positive thoughts, he is receptive to similar thoughts and attracts similar incidents in his life. If we are blissful, people with a similar attitude will be attracted towards us. If we are dull, lethargic and depressed, the same type of people will be attracted towards us.

Thoughts and desires are energy. They contribute towards shaping our actions and lives. Everyday we create our bodies, minds, actions and our reality by our thoughts. We are what our thoughts are.

We are fully responsible for what happens around us even though we may be unaware of the implications of our thoughts. That is why it is important to become fully aware of ourselves. Our thoughts and actions influence not just us but the entire world. It may be hard to believe logically, but a butterfly flapping its wings can cause a tsunami in another part of the world!

Buddha says, 'All that we are is the result of what we have thought. What we think, we become.'

All our negative energies cause violence in this world. Everyone is responsible in some way for creating the terrorists of today. When we realize that our thoughts influence the world, we will become more responsible and more aware of what we think and what we do. We will help improve the collective consciousness of which we are all a part.

Quantum Physics refers to this concept as *entanglement*. None of us is isolated. We are part of the same universal fabric. Whatever impression we create on this fabric is transmitted to everyone, and everything else connected to the fabric.

Next, Krishna says that He is the sun amongst all the shining objects, and among the stars He is the moon. We may say that the moon is not a star. We would be factually correct. Krishna refers to the influence that the moon wields upon earth and humans. It is scientifically established that out of all celestial bodies around planet earth, the two most important influences are the sun and the moon. No one doubts that the sun is a star and that it is the brightest object that can be seen.

The moon influences the tides of the ocean as well as the tides of the human minds. Of all planetary, non-planetary and solar bodies that surround us, with the

exception of the sun, the moon exerts the greatest influence on us both in a broader planetary sense and in an individual sense.

People have mood variations depending on the phases of the moon. New moon and full moon days dramatically influence our emotional well-being, for good and for bad. Being the physical mass closest to the earth, the gravitational force of the moon affects each of us deeply. The moon influences far more than its size would suggest, or its classification as a satellite would have us believe.

This is why the Hindu astrological and astronomical systems consider the moon to be a planet. This belief is not based on whether the moon revolves around the earth as a satellite instead of around the sun as a planet. It is based on the effect that the moon has on human beings and upon planet earth.

In *vedic* astrology, the stars, are the different positions in the sky that the moon passes through in a cycle of 27 to 28 days. These stars are referred to as the wives of the moon. This is why Krishna refers to Himself as the moon amongst the stars, that He is the pride of the stars.

Recently I read that the moon may have been a planet in our solar system. The article said that the moon and the earth were of similar size and collided. Consequently the size of the moon was reduced and it became caught in the gravitational pull of the earth as a satellite. Krishna certainly knew more than what we know now!

Krishna declares that amongst the *Vedas*, He is the Sama Veda. The *Vedas* are the timeless truths expounded by the *ṛṣis* as the expressions of truth experienced by them. These are the revelations of the truth experienced through intuition by the seers. There are four *Vedas*: Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sama Veda and Atharva Veda.

Each *Veda* consists of four parts: *mantra-saṁhita* or hymns, *brāhmaṇa* or explanations of *mantras* (or rituals), *āranyaka*, forest books which give the philosophical meaning of rituals, and the *Upaniṣads*, essence of the *Vedas*.

The Sama Veda is a collection of hymns in praise of *agni* (fire), *Indra* (king of the gods) and *soma* (drink of the gods). While the Rig Veda is the oldest *Veda*, Sama Veda is the basis for all musical systems of India. The basic notes of all music, not just of Indian music, originated with Sama Veda. The seven notes, which are the fundamentals of all music all over the world, were derived from Sama Veda, which even today is sung, and not recited.

The Rig and other *Vedas* may be recited only by a few scholars today, but Sama Veda is heard everywhere. It is the essence of Carnatic and Hindustani music forms,

the two major classical music forms of India. As the essence of music, Sama Veda is also the essence of dance forms.

One does not need to understand music and dance. It is enough to indulge and experience. So it is with Krishna. All we need to do is experience Him.

Among the gods, Krishna says He is Vasava (Indra), the king of gods.

The five senses, *jñānendriya*, namely sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, originate from the mind and are of the mind. Without the mind, the senses cannot function. He says He is the subtlest and most powerful, the mind. In living beings, He is the life force, the consciousness, not merely body and mind.

Rudras are the elemental powers worshipped by the Rig Veda. The word *Rudra* means to cry. Metaphorically the *Rudras* were worshipped to obtain some gain. When in deep anguish, if one prays to one of the *Rudras* in awareness, it was believed to bring results. There are eleven *Rudras*: Ajiakapad, Ahirbudhnya, Virabhadra, Girisa, Sankara, Aparajita, Hara, Anakaraka, Pinaki, Bhaga and Sambhu. Sankara is the doer of good. Sankara is also the precursor to Shiva in the evolution of the Hindu constellation of divinity. Shiva means auspiciousness; auspiciousness born without a reason. Wherever Shiva is, good happens for no reason. Of the *Rudras*, Krishna says He is Shankara.

Yaksas are celestial beings considered to be the creators of wealth. The king of the *Yakṣas* is Kubera, the god of wealth. *Rākṣasas* too are celestial beings of a negative nature of hoarding power and wealth. *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas* are keepers of wealth. They do not enjoy wealth. Of the *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas*, Krishna says He is the god of wealth, the king Kubera.

The *Vasus* are the attendants of Vishnu. They represent various aspects of Nature. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad mentions eight *Vasus*: *agni* (fire), *prthvī* (earth), *vāyu* (wind), *antarikṣa* (space), *āditya* (light), *dyaus* (sky), *candramas* (moon) and *nakṣatrāṇi* (stars). Krishna says among the *Vasus*, He is the formless fire.

Meru is the golden peak, the metaphoric abode of gods, and its foothills are the Himalayas. It is also said to represent the spine of humans. Amongst the peaks, Krishna says He is the majestic *Meru*.

Brihaspati is the priest of the gods. He dispels darkness and ignorance and destroys the enemies of the gods. Among the warriors, Krishna says He is Skanda, the supreme General of the forces of gods. Skanda is the son of Shiva and Parvati, who destroyed Tarakasura, the demon who, along with his hordes of demons,

tormented the *devas*. This is a metaphysical representation of the Divine as the supreme General of the being, vanquishing the senses, desires and ego.

Of the water bodies, Krishna says He is the mighty ocean, infinite in expanse and essential to all life forms. In fact, it is the origin of all life forms.

Of the great sages, Krishna says He is Bhrigu, one of the *saptaṛṣis* (seven sages who form the cosmic energy). Bhrigu is believed to have been created by Brahma to aid him in the creation of the universe.

Of the vibrations, Krishna says He is the transcendental OM. OM is the primal sound from which the universe manifested itself. It is the *praṇava*, the mystic symbol.

The symbol of OM - ॐ contains three curves, a semicircle and a dot. Out of the three curves, the upper curve symbolizes the waking state, the lower curve denotes deep sleep and the right curve denotes the dream state. It thus represents the three states of individual consciousness. The dot represents the fourth state of consciousness, *turiya*, complete awareness. The semicircle represents *māyā*, illusion, and separates the dot from the three curves. But the open semicircle represents the Absolute which is unaffected by *māyā*.

Of the different types of sacrifices, Krishna says He is the *japa* or chanting of holy names.

Of the immovable objects in the world, He says He is the mighty and majestic Himalayas. The Himalayas, literally meaning 'the abode of snow', is home to hundreds of peaks, including the highest peak in the world. Some great rivers originate in it and flow through it, including Ganga, Yamuna, Brahmaputra and Indus.

The Himalayas have a great unique spiritual significance as well. *Kailash*, the home of Shiva, is the representation on earth of the metaphorical *Meru*. The Himalayan mountains are the spiritual incubator of the world. The Himalayas are truly a powerful energy field.

For thousands of years, millions of *sādhus* (sages) have lived there and left their bodies from there. When enlightened masters leave their bodies, the result of their penance, the energy of their spiritual penance, is not carried by the spirit. They leave behind this energy in their bodies. Imagine how much energy is in the Himalayas, where so many enlightened beings have left their bodies! We should be

thankful to the Himalayas since their positive energy balances the collective negativity in the world.

The Himalayan Mountains are home to me. I never believed when I left home to travel to the Himalayas that I would return to South India. I imagined that I would spend the rest of my life in those mountains. It was in the Himalayas that I met Mahavatar Baba, the great master who has been living in these mountains for thousands of years. You may believe it or not believe it, but that is the truth.

Mahavatar Baba called me by the name I am now called. He walked into me after calling me Paramahansa Nithyananda on the way to Kedarnath. When I turned around, he had disappeared, as if he merged into me. I thought he was asking me to look for a master named Nithyananda! So I went searching for this master.

More than a year later, at Calcutta, on the banks of the river Hooghly, a tributary of the river Ganga, an old *sanyāsi* insisted on giving me *sanyās* before he died. I was not keen to take *sanyās*. I was looking for enlightenment. But he insisted. So I agreed. To my utter surprise he gave me the name Paramahansa Nithyananda.

I asked this *sanyāsi*, 'Why?' He said, 'I do not know. This is what I was asked to do.' He did not explain who asked him to give me the name and initiation.

So I tell my disciples that Mahavatar Baba is our *kulaguru*, master of our lineage, and Kedar is our *kṣetra*, our spiritual location. I have taken groups of devotees to the Himalayas during the summer of every year to show them places that I had wandered on foot. One person from our group had *darśan* of Mahavatar Baba. For six months her body was in trouble, such was the energy force of Baba!

When we travel through the Himalayas I show them how the majestic mountains make humans feel insignificant. They are so majestic and powerful. They are elemental nature. What you see one year is not the same as what you see the next year. The mountains have shifted. The rivers have altered course. As one travels, if one internalizes the awesome grandeur without expression, if one experiences the beauty without using words, one can capture the essence of nature.

When Krishna says, 'I am the Himalayan Mountain out of all unmoving things,' I can feel the energy of Krishna in these mountains. Everyone who has been with me on these trips have felt it at some point or another. They are blessed. They have been in Krishna consciousness!

Q: You say that ego needs to be dropped to realize the Self and be enlightened. You say ego is the identity we carry. But to live in this material world one needs an identity. How can we function otherwise?

I have explained this before and let me explain again.

Our ego expresses itself in two forms: *ahaṅkāra*, outer ego and *mamakāra*, inner ego. Outer ego is how we try to convey ourselves to others, the identity we project externally. This is always bigger than what we are because we want people to think well of us. They should feel we are bigger, richer, happier and stronger than what we are. Only then we feel they will respect us.

The inner ego, *mamakāra*, is the projection of our identity within ourselves, the internal projection. This is where all our warts stand out. We remember our weaknesses, our guilt and all our negativities. Our inner projection exposes us to what we really think of ourselves, under the skin, so to speak.

Some of you may think that you have high self-esteem and you never think poorly of yourself. Alright, then do you accept that you are God? Are you convinced you are divine? No! Then you are not projecting truthfully inside because you *are* divine. Each of us is divine. There is no sinner amongst us.

This difference between the inner and outer ego, *mamakāra* and *ahaṅkāra*, creates suffering within you. The moment you realize that you are divine, the moment you realize your inner potential, there is no differential in how you perceive yourself inside and outside, and you have no suffering.

I work as a surgeon on you to remove your ego. This means I work on raising your inner awareness to your true potential and eliminate this differential between *mamakāra* and *ahaṅkāra*.

When you become enlightened, this differentiation dissolves. You will develop a powerful inner strength arising out of this realization of your potential. You have the capability to do anything that is needed.

However, you no longer feel connected to the body and mind that you occupy. You are now connected to a far greater entity, much larger than your puny body-mind system. You are part of the universal consciousness, the collective identity of billions, if not trillions of living beings.

An enlightened being with no individual identity, identifies himself with the supreme, the divine, and the universal consciousness. Such a being functions effortlessly and spontaneously from this level.



I Am The Lion

10.26 Of all the trees, I am the Banyan tree and of all the sages of the gods, I am Narada.

Of the Gandharvas, I am Chitraratha. Of the realized souls, I am the sage Kapila.

10.27 Of the horses, know me to be Uchhaishravas born of the nectar generated from the churning of the ocean.

Of the elephants, Airavata and of men, the king.

10.28 Of the weapons, I am the thunderbolt. Of the cows, I am Kamadhenu;

For begetting children, I am the god of love. Of the snakes, I am Vasuki.

10.29 Of the serpents, I am Ananta. Of the water deities, I am Varuna.

Of the ancestors, I am Aryama and of the ones who ensure discipline, I am Yama.

10.30 Of the Daitya (demons), I am Prahlad and of the reckoners, I am Time.

Of the animals, I am the king of animals (Lion) and of the birds, I am Garuda.

Krishna says among the trees He is the banyan tree. The banyan tree develops its root-like structures from the branches. These grow into the earth as secondary roots. The metaphysical meaning of the banyan tree is that just as the banyan tree grows its roots upside down unlike other trees, the spiritual person shuns the illusory outer world, the world that most people run after. Instead, he goes inwards towards the Absolute.

In a later chapter Krishna says that the leaves of the banyan tree are the *Vedas*. He who knows this tree is the knower of the *Vedas*.

Of all the spiritually enlightened masters, the *ṛṣis*, Krishna says He is Narada. Narada is considered the greatest of all devotees. His mind is immersed in remembering Vishnu, forever chanting 'Narayana, Narayana'. Krishna identifies Himself with His greatest devotee.

Of the *Gandharvas*, the celestial beings, Krishna says He is Chitraratha. *Gandharvas* are celestial beings skilled in music and they are guardians of the *soma* juice – the nectar of the divine beings. Chitraratha is the king of the *Gandharvas*.

Among the Self-realized persons, Krishna says He is Kapila the sage, the author of the Sankhya system of philosophy, which deals with the elements of the physical universe and the spiritual world. Kapila is also considered an incarnation of Vishnu.

Ucchaishravas is the legendary snow-white horse that emerged during the churning of the ocean of milk described in the Bhagavatam.

According to the story, the *devas*, the good, oppressed by the *asuras*, the evil, appealed to Lord Vishnu for help. Vishnu directed the *devas* to churn the ocean of milk upon which Vishnu rests, using *Meru*, the mountain, as the staff and Vasuki, the serpent, as the rope. Vishnu became the base as a tortoise upon which *Meru* rested. Since the *devas* did not have the strength to do the job alone, they took the help of the *asuras* promising them a share in whatever materialized.

During the churning, various divine entities emerged. Among these were the divine horse, Ucchaishravas, and the four-tusked king of the elephants, Airavata, whom Indra took as his mount.

As part of the churning process, a deadly poison *alahala* also emerged that threatened to take the lives of the *devas* and *asuras*. Shiva came to their rescue and drank the poison.

Finally, the nectar of immortality emerged. Vishnu, in the form of a beautiful damsel Mohini kept the *asuras* occupied, while He allowed the *devas* to drink the *amṛt*, nectar of immortality, and become invincible.

This is a metaphysical representation signifying how we are pushed and pulled by desires in our lives. From this churning in our life, various products emerge. The nectar of immortality emerges when we offer our entire being to the Divine, as we

go beyond the push and pull of desires, beyond life and death. Then we dwell in ultimate bliss. There may be obstacles in the path. Yet, the master supports and protects us during our churning, as we endeavor to realize the ultimate state. Just as Shiva drank the poison that came out as a result of churning the ocean, the master holds the disciple steady as the unconscious *samskāras* rise to the surface during our spiritual maturing.

Krishna says, among the weapons, He is *vajra*, the thunderbolt. This is the weapon of Indra, king of the demigods. Vishnu is considered to be present in the *vajra*. Indra was specifically given this weapon - the thunderbolt, for a purpose. Krishna does not choose His own weapon, the *cakra*, the mighty discus. Instead he used Indra's *vajra* that was made from the bones of the great sage Dadhichi, who gave up his life to destroy the evil Vritasura.

Among the cows, He says He is the sacred cow, Kamadhuka, or Kamadhenu, which also emerged during the churning of the ocean. In the Hindu way of life, the cow is worshipped for her essential utility. Kamadhuka is considered to be the cow that grants all wishes and is the mother of all cows.

Krishna says, for begetting children, He is the god of love, the basis for procreation.

He says He is the Vasuki of serpents. Vasuki is the king of snakes. Vasuki was used as the rope and he wound himself around *Meru*, the staff, for churning the ocean of milk.

Krishna says, among the *nāgas*, non-poisonous snakes or creatures of the nether world, He is Ananta, the many-hooded serpent who forms the bed of Lord Vishnu. He is said to support all the planets on his various hoods, including the earth.

Among the water beings, Krishna says He is Varuna, the god of the mightiest water body, the ocean.

Among the ancestors, Krishna says He is Aryama, one of the *Ādityas*, who presides over a planet occupied by the energy bodies of our ancestors.

Of the ones who ensure discipline, Krishna says He is Yama, the Lord of death. Death is the perfect equalizer of all beings. Death is the only certain thing in the life of all beings and it treats everyone exactly the same whether they are big or small, rich or poor. So the Lord of death, Yama, ensures perfect discipline. The Sanskrit word *yama* means both discipline and death. *Yama* is the first of the eight paths of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga.

Of the *Daityas*, Krishna says He is Prahlad. The *Daityas* are considered to be a race of beings that warred against the demigods. Prahlad was the son of a powerful Daitya King, Hiranyakasipu. Hiranyakasipu did severe penance and obtained a boon that he could not be killed by either man or animal, at night or in the day, either inside or outside his abode, on earth or in space and neither by animate nor inanimate weapon.

Upon receiving this boon, Hiranyakasipu was convinced that he was immortal. He believed there was no way in which all these conditions could be fulfilled; therefore he believed that death could never touch him. He became arrogant and attacked the *devas*.

However, his son Prahlad was a pious child. Hiranyakasipu could not tolerate that his son was a staunch devotee of Lord Vishnu, someone he despised. He was furious to see Prahlad chant Vishnu's name day and night. In his fury, Hiranyakasipu made multiple attempts to have his son killed by pushing him off a cliff, trampling him under an elephant and making him sit on a burning pyre.

Hiranyakasipu's attempts were futile since each time Prahlad prayed to Vishnu in complete surrender and escaped the punishment untouched.

I mentioned this story earlier but I will elaborate on it a bit more now. Once, when Prahlad extolled the glories of Vishnu, Hiranyakasipu furiously asked him, 'If you claim that Vishnu exists everywhere, does he exist in this pillar as well?' Prahlad calmly and confidently replied, 'Yes, he very much exists in the pillar.' This was too much for Hiranyakasipu. He charged at the pillar and smashed it.

To his utter surprise, a figure that was half-man and half-lion emerged from the pillar. Consequently, it was neither man nor animal. It was twilight time. Hence, it was neither day nor night. The pillar was located at the threshold of the exit of Hiranyakasipu's palace. So it was neither inside nor outside his abode. The figure, Narasimha held Hiranyakasipu in his hands, placed the terrified king on his thighs so he was neither on earth nor in space. In this state, Narasimha tore into Hiranyakasipu's stomach with his claws, thus killing him by neither an animate nor inanimate weapon!

All the conditions granted to Hiranyakasipu in the boon had been honored and still death could grab him! Vishnu, as the incarnation of Narasimha, killed Hiranyakasipu and proved once again that He is always available to take care of his devotees.

The young Prahlad is a supreme example of devotion. His life is the example that total surrender to the Divine is possible and that such surrender leads the Divine to completely care for His devotees, in all situations and at all times.

Of the reckoners, Krishna says He is *Kāla*, Time itself. Time is the ultimate reckoner. No being exists who can beat Time. Irrespective of who it is, Time always moves on. It cannot be stopped by anyone.

Of the animals, Krishna says He is the Lion, king of the jungle.

Among birds, He says He is Garuda, king of birds, the eagle who is the mount of Lord Vishnu.

Q: Krishna talks about the churning of the milky ocean and of the many beings that came out of the ocean. What is the significance of this event and the beings that emerged from the ocean of milk?

The Bhagavatam epic says that the celestial beings or demigods wished to extract the divine nectar from the ocean of milk that Vishnu rests upon in order to become immortal and defeat their nemesis, the demons. Since the demigods did not have the physical power to do the churning by themselves, they took the help of the demons. At the same time, they asked Vishnu to ensure that only they had access to the nectar.

This story signifies the fight between your positive thoughts, represented by the demigods, and your negative and depressing thoughts represented by the demons. The fight between the uplifting and depressing thoughts is the churning that happens within you. You feel like a roller coaster, sometimes happy but most of the time sad.

The only way out of the churning is to become detached or un-clutched. When you understand and internalize that thoughts are not connected to one another, you become un-clutched. You realize that you link one thought to another to form a shaft, either a shaft of pain or a shaft of pleasure. Either way you suffer. Even the shaft of pleasure is not continuous. When it stops, you feel let down.

Initially, when you go through the unclutching process, as one does in the Nithyanandam meditation program that I personally conduct, your positive and negative thoughts join together to prevent you from dropping them. The churning

gets worse. You get seriously depressed. Even small, negative thoughts that you would normally ignore get magnified and haunt you.

The master is the tortoise in this process and the process of unclutching is the staff or spindle. Throughout the process, your master supports you. You may develop minor powers of intuition during this process analogous to the divine creatures that arose out of the ocean as it got churned. And the *apsaras*, the celestial maidens who emerge, represent fantasies that you may develop during your depression.

Eventually, the nectar of intelligence emerges and you settle into a state where there are mainly positive thoughts. As you progress further, you merely witness your thoughts with the understanding that these thoughts are unconnected. You are aware that connecting them only leads to suffering.

As you progress further, you reach a thoughtless state. You need trust in your master and patience in order to reach this state.



I Am Rama

10.31 Of the purifiers, I am the Wind. Of the wielders of weapons, I am Rama.

Of the water beings, I am the Shark and of the flowing rivers, I am Jahnavi (Ganga).

10.32 Of all creations, I am surely the Beginning and end and the middle, Oh Arjuna.

Of all knowledge, I am the Spiritual knowledge of the Self. Of all arguments, I am the Logic.

10.33 Of the letters, I am the 'A'. Of the dual words, I am the Compounds and surely I am the never-ending time.

I am the Omniscient who sees everything.

10.34 I am the all-devouring Death and I am the Creator of all things of the future.

Of the feminine, I am Fame, Fortune, Beautiful speech, Memory, intelligence, Faithfulness and Patience.

10.35 Of the Sama Veda hymns, I am the Brihat Sama and of all poetry, I am the Gayatri.

Of the months, I am Margashirsha and of the seasons, I am Spring.

10.36 Of all the cheating, I am Gambling. Of the effulgent things, I am the Effulgence.

I am Victory, I am Effort, I am the Goodness of the good.

10.37 Of the descendants of Vrishni, I am Vasudeva Krishna. Of the Pandava, I am Arjuna.

Of the sages, I am also Vyasa and of the thinkers, I am Usana.

10.38 Of rulers, I am their Scepter. Of the victorious, I am Statesmanship. Of all secrets, I am also Silence. Of the wise, I am Wisdom.

Of the purifying elements, Krishna says He is the formless and pure wind. The wind pervades the other elements such as earth, water and fire and removes impurities.

Of the wielders of weapons, He says He is Rama, the seventh incarnation of Vishnu. Rama defeated Ravana, the demonic ruler of Lanka who abducted his wife, Sita. Rama was a righteous ruler and chosen heir to his father's throne. Yet, Rama went into exile to uphold his father's vow. Rama is considered the greatest archer ever known. Of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, Rama is the incarnation just prior to Krishna.

Of the aquatic beings, the fish, He says He is the Shark, the most powerful and feared.

Of the rivers, He says He is Ganga. The river Ganga is worshipped in India as goddess Ganga. Millions of people pray in the waters of the Ganga everyday. On its banks, millions of people gather everyday to offer *pūjā* to Ganga and to take a holy dip in the waters. The sage Jahnu swallowed Ganga as She rushed down the Himalayas into his ashram. Bhagiratha begged the *ṛṣis* to release Ganga. That is why Ganga is known as the daughter of Jahnu and has the name 'Jahnavi'.

As Ganga descends from the Himalayas to the plains, there are multiple places of pilgrimage where people revere the river and offer daily prayers. Ganga is considered to be the river that descended from the heavens. Millions of people standing and praying in the waters have energized the whole river and explains why Ganga has the inexplicable ability of cleansing Herself.

Let me share a factual observation recorded in the reminiscences of the British who ruled India. When the British traveled by ship from England to India, their water became spoilt during the long journey. However, on the return trip from India to England, the water from the Ganga remained pure even after reaching England. The research showed that the Ganga water had the miraculous power of cleansing itself.

Of all the creations, Krishna says He is the beginning, the middle and the end, thus establishing that He is all that existed, exists and will exist. He is the creator, created and creation.

Of the various branches of knowledge, He is the ultimate spiritual knowledge, Self-realization. Other branches of knowledge result from intelligence. Only Self-realization requires intuition and something beyond.

Of all arguments, He says He is the logic that binds everything together.

Of the letters, Krishna says He is the first letter, the origin of all that is spoken and written. Of the dual words, a class of words in Sanskrit, He is the compound word. He affirms He is never-ending time and the Creator of this universe, Brahma.

Krishna says He is the Creator and Destroyer.

Of the feminine qualities, He says He is the seven *Devis*, goddesses, who impart fame, fortune, beautiful speech, memory, intelligence, faithfulness and patience. In Sanskrit all these qualities have feminine nouns to represent them. He says these attributes in women come from Him.

Krishna said in an earlier verse that among the *Vedas*, He is the Sama Veda that contains beautiful songs and hymns. Now, He says, among these hymns, He is the Brihat Sama, a unique melody.

Of all poetic meters, He says He is Gayatri. Various invocations and prayers in the *Vedic* literature are set to Gayatri meter, including Devi Gayatri, Rudra Gayatri, etc. This meter is 24 syllables, usually in 3 or 4 lines.

This verse can also be translated to mean that Krishna says, ‘I am Gayatri amongst the *mantras*.’ *Mantras* are the sacred syllables that create awareness of the divinity within our inner space. The very vibrations created while chanting the Sanskrit *mantras* purify the mind-body system and raise the energetic frequency. Here, Krishna states that Gayatri is the greatest of the *mantras*. Its popularity has been evident from the earliest *vedic* times. This was the first *mantras* taught when the child entered a *gurukul*, the traditional *vedic* schools of the enlightened masters.

Gayatri literally translated means ‘the song that emancipates’. Gayatri is an invocation to the ultimate intelligence. This prayer creates self-awareness:

*Om bhūr bhuva suvaḥ
tat savitur vareṇyam
bhargo devasya dhīmahi
dhiyo yonāḥ prachodayāt*

Freely translated, this means:

We bow to You, that Ruler of physical, mental and spiritual planes,
That which is beyond all, the supreme Brilliance,
May You kindle our inner awareness!

It is a prayer to the supreme intelligence to awaken our inner intelligence.

Gayatri is not merely a prayer or a *mantra*. It is far more than that. It is a *tantra*, a technique that can create tremendous awareness and intelligence in our being. *Mantra* means the syllable that shows the way to go beyond joys and sufferings of the world. *Mantra* makes us more centered. *Tantra* is more than that. It is an instant delivery system.

Generally, religions condition us from childhood by installing in us value systems and beliefs, our *saṁskāras* – past engraved memories. Gayatri is a technique that completely liberates us from our *saṁskāras*. Gayatri gives complete freedom and thus a new way to think. It is like a torch to guide one on one's path. Children were taught this *mantra* from early childhood in ancient times so that they could be free from their *saṁskāras*.

Let us say a person asks for the way out of a forest.

You explain, 'Go straight ahead one mile and you will see a lion. Then, take a left turn and proceed one mile and you will see a snake. From there, take another left turn and continue until you see a panther. At that point, go right and walk straight ahead until you come out of the forest.'

If you guide him like this, the man will not find his way out of the forest. When you walked into the forest, you saw those animals. But by the time the man takes these directions and walks into the forest, the scene will be different and he probably will not have the same animals there to guide him. He will be lost!

Consequently, the way you traveled may not be the right way for him. So, instead of giving him useless directions, the best method is just to give him a torch or flashlight. He can use the torch to find his own way out of the forest.

Gayatri is not about giving someone a belief or prayer to be chanted to any gods or during any form of worship. It is a pure technique that can lead to pure intelligence.

Continuous meditation on this *mantra*, just continuous recitation of this *mantra* with awareness, directly leads one to the ultimate intelligence.

Gayatri mantra says, 'Let us meditate on the energy which awakens the intelligence in our Being. Let that intelligence help us meditate on It.'

Contemplate the meaning of Gayatri mantra. This *mantra* creates a beautiful vibration inside our being. Repeating the *mantra* mentally and letting the *mantra* sink into our being is like planting a seed in our being that will lead to thousands of fruits in the outer world as well as inner world. It gives us what we want along with giving us the inner space in which we don't want anything.

Among the months, Krishna says, He is the month of Margasirsha, November and December in the Gregorian calendar. In India, these months bring joy to people as they are the time when grains are collected from the fields. Also, the month has a lot of spiritual significance because the auspicious days of *Vaikuntṭa Ekādasi* fall in this month. This month in the divine calendar is the early morning time, the *brahma muhūrtaṁ*, the most auspicious part of the day. This is the time recommended to focus on worship.

Among the seasons, Krishna says, He is spring. Nature is at the pinnacle of Her creation in spring with new blossoms on trees and pleasant weather, which is neither too hot nor too cold. Spring thus signifies life, growth and the beginning of the cycle of life.

Krishna declares that of all vices, He is gambling. Even in the vices He says He is present! Anybody who deludes himself by thinking that He is not present in 'unvirtuous' activities should realize that the Divine exists everywhere and in all activities and things.

By this, Krishna also refers to the fact that Yudhishtra's vice of gambling brought about this Great War. Known as the wisest of all men, the most righteous being, Yudhishtra, the Pandava prince, had one vice that brought him down. That was his weakness for gambling.

Krishna says, He is the effulgence that is the essence of all radiant things.

He declares He is the Victory of the victorious, the effort needed to succeed, and *satva*, Goodness, amongst the attributes.

Krishna's father, Vasudeva, was a member of the Vrishni or Yadava race. Amongst the Vrishnis, Krishna says He is the ultimate, Vasudeva Krishna. Amongst the Pandavas, He says He is the arch bowman, Arjuna.

Of the sages, He says He is Vyasa, author of the great epic Mahabharata that includes the Bhagavad Gita. Vyasa is also referred to as Veda Vyasa, the compiler of

the *Vedas* who split one *Veda* into four *Vedas* so that the common person could understand the knowledge in the *Vedas*.

Of the thinkers, Krishna says, He is Usana, also known as Sukra, guru of the *asuras*, celestials with a negative bent of mind.

Krishna says, 'I am the scepter, the *daṇḍa*, the rod of punishment of the King.' As a master, Krishna wields the *yoga daṇḍa*, the divine staff of wisdom. A ruler is not merely a refuge for his subjects, but also the rule giver, the disciplinarian. So is the master.

Q: You have talked about the master and the Zen stick. Why is this Zen stick or yoga danda needed, since the master is compassion incarnate?

The master's compassion is expressed as the *yoga daṇḍa*, the Zen stick or spiritual scalpel. The master is only interested in the dissolution of a disciple's ego.

The master can be ruthless in destroying the disciple's ego because the master leads one from ignorance to wisdom. Ego is the darkness, cause of all darkness. The master is the master surgeon, a surgeon who removes egos. A disciple who comes to me must be prepared for this surgery. He cannot run away midway through the procedure.

A follower can be a mere devotee, gazing at the form from afar, framing the master in his own template of ignorance. Such people nail the master to the wall in a picture frame. By worshipping, instead of practicing, they kill the master.

I tell people that if they wish to be mere gazers, I shall give them brain candy because that is what they come here for. If you are a true seeker, be prepared to be burnt, operated upon, and be prepared to be subjected to the *yoga daṇḍa*. That is the route to salvation.

People ask me, 'If we leave you, will you curse us?'

Be very clear, an enlightened being is incapable of cursing anyone! He cannot wish anyone ill. Whatever an enlightened being utters, that word is truth, *satya*, and it will happen. But that word can only be compassionate. Because an enlightened being is boundary-less, He is one with the universe. And you are part of Him. How can I think ill of myself?

Please understand this important point:: If a so-called master threatens to curse you, he is not a master. He is not enlightened. A master's punishment is compassionate. It arises solely from love. It may be tough love, but it is unconditional love. What can you give the master? What can He want from you?

My spirit is linked to this body in a fragile way. It can leave and not return. That is why I must do the opposite of meditations. Ramakrishna craved sweets, *jalebi*. People who were not aware of the reason laughed at him. They would ask, 'How can this person whom they call God have such a weakness?' That weakness arose from His compassion for them, so that He may stay in his body and redeem them.

When close disciples ask what brings my spirit back to this body every morning, I can only say that it is the faces of those who are in deep need of me. As long as the need exists, the spirit longer will return.

That's why Krishna, the greatest of all *masters*, says that He will return time after time to redeem the good and destroy evil. He does not need to physically destroy those who are evil. All evil disappears in His energy.



There Is No End To My Glories!

10.39 Also, of whatever beings exist, I am the Seed, Oh Arjuna.

There is nothing that exists without Me in all creations, moving and unmoving.

10.40 There is no end to My divine glories Oh Parantapa.

What has been said by Me are examples of My detailed glories.

10.41 You should know that whatever glories exist or anything beautiful and glorious that exists, all that surely is born of just a portion of My splendor.

10.42 Of what use is it to know about the many manifestations of this kind, Oh Arjuna?

I pervade this entire world with just a part of Myself.

Krishna says to Arjuna, 'Enough has been said. You can take no more. Whatever I have said, whatever more I can say, will only be a drop in the ocean, a small fragment of what I am. There is nothing that is not Me, nothing that can exist outside of Me, and nothing that has not been created from and by Me.'

He has given the background to Arjuna, so that Arjuna is prepared to see His formless form. Arjuna is now in a mode of total surrender and in deep gratitude.

Now, let us also experience these words of Krishna in a mood of absolute surrender and total gratitude.

Close your eyes, and meditate on the divine glory of Krishna.

Express deep gratitude for whatever way your life has been elevated. Express deep gratitude to whoever has helped you achieve health, wealth and education. Each and every one of these are expressions of the Divine.

Remember every one of them for the reasons they were in your life. Remember all of them who helped you to flower in your life. Remember all of them with love and respect, with love and gratitude.

Remember your mother who gave you this body. She is the embodiment of the Divine, *Parabrahma* Krishna. Give her your gratitude.

Remember your father who gave you life. Feel him and give your gratitude to him.

Remember all the teachers and professors who gave you education. They are embodiments of the Divine.

Feel deeply grateful to all of them for their contribution to your life and to your being.

Whoever has helped you to grow economically, whoever contributed to your economical growth, directly or indirectly, remember all of them and give your gratitude to them. Feel deeply connected to all of them.

Whoever gave you mental strength and understanding about life when you needed it, whenever you were depressed, whoever gave you courage when you were in a low mood, remember all of them. They are embodiments of the Divine, representatives of the universal consciousness. Remember all of them and give them your gratitude.

Whoever helped you grow spiritually, whoever helped you grow in spiritual understanding, remember all of them. Give them your gratitude. They are representatives of the Divine. Give them your gratitude for giving spiritual understanding for adding something to your life.

Whoever helped you with understanding on the level of material wealth or spiritual growth, remember all of them and offer them your gratitude.

Ultimately, give gratitude to the divine energy, *Parabrahma* Krishna, who gave all this intelligence and understanding to us in our life.

Just drop yourself and become one with the cosmic energy. May you become part of the whole universe, part of the energy that is moving the sun, moon and planet earth.

OM śānti, śānti, śānti

Relax. Now open your eyes. Continue to spend at least the next few hours in this mood of surrender. Drop yourself. You will see this experience works miracles in your being. It can transform you.

Forget about yourself. Drop yourself and let the Divine, let this cosmic energy prevail. Let Him be. Let the Divine be. This surrender mood can transform your whole consciousness. It can make you experience the ultimate truth that Krishna explains here: His glories, His *vibhūti*, His divine glory.

When you are blissful, whatever you see looks divine and glorious. May you reach that bliss.

Let us pray to *Parabrahma* Krishna, the universal energy, Existence, to guide us all and to give us all the experience of eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.

Thank you!

Thus ends the tenth chapter named Vibhuthi Yogaḥ of the Upaniṣad of Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of Yoga, dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.

BhagavadGita

Krishna: The Cosmic Window

CHAPTER 11

How does one experience Universal Consciousness?
What exactly happens?
What basic qualification does one need for this
experience?
Krishna explains with His very Presence!



- ◆ *Swamiji*, you mentioned somewhere that Christ is not a Christian and Buddha is not a Buddhist. Can you elaborate?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, I am confused. Surrender itself means that you leave the decision to the master. But I hear you say that when someone leaves that decision to You, they do it out of ego. I do not understand.
- ◆ *Swamiji*, You have said that God is bliss, and God is love. So, when we experience bliss and love, are we God too?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, You say that Arjuna's relationship with Krishna was redefined. Earlier you had explained that Arjuna's relationship with Krishna was one of friendship. What happens now?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, you said bliss is God, and we do not experience God. So God only remains a concept. But you have said we can experience bliss, which means that we can experience God. How then do we work towards achieving bliss?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, How can this happen? When we talk about an *iṣṭadevatā*, a favorite deity, it is someone we can relate to. How can we relate to a terrifying form?
- ◆ In what way are your teachings different from other great masters? You have said not to renounce what we already have. Many interpret the scriptures to mean that we must give up all our worldly possessions. I am confused.
- ◆ If time is absolute and time decides everything, then where is the question of free will and choice? Even if we accept choicelessness, how can we drop the fear of not knowing what will happen?

- ◆ There are those who say we are all sinners; we are born sinners; that we must redeem ourselves to reach God and there is only one God. What do you say to this?
- ◆ You said that one of the five *bhāvas*, moods, in which one approaches a master or *iṣṭadevatā* is *sakha bhāva* or friendship. Why then is Arjuna afraid of having expressed that friendship?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, I am a mother of young children. Can you advise me on how to bring them up the right way?
- ◆ Vishnu and Lakshmi are almost always worshipped in gentle and beautiful forms. Shiva and Kali, however, are in austere and fearful forms. Does this mean that Shiva and Kali are in a higher form?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, the vision Krishna gave Arjuna, is it the same as what Christianity and other religions describe through the word grace? It is such a beautiful word brimming with meaning. Can you please elaborate?



Krishna: The Cosmic Window

In this chapter, Krishna shows His cosmic and divine form to Arjuna. Krishna gives Arjuna the experience of universal consciousness. For the first time, Arjuna is about to experience Krishna's divine form. From the beginning he has only been hearing of Krishna's divinity again and again. Now he is about to experience what has so far only heard.

Of all the chapters in Bhagavad Gita, this chapter, *Viśvarūpa Darśana Yoga* - Vision of the cosmic form, has a very special significance. It is in this chapter that Krishna reveals His divine Self, that of *Parabrahma* Krishna. Elsewhere He speaks with the authority of *Parabrahma* Krishna, but He is still present as the mortal human Krishna form. Now, at Arjuna's request, He reveals His true cosmic Self to Arjuna.

In this sense, this is the most important of all the chapters in Bhagavad Gita, not for its philosophical or spiritual importance, but because of the revelation of the Divine. When the cosmic form is revealed to Arjuna, if one is immersed in this chapter's content as he was, nothing more needs to be said, nothing more needs to be experienced.

In the previous chapter, along with Arjuna we too heard the glories of Krishna, the complete expression of the Divine. Krishna declares, 'Amongst the stars, I am the Moon, amongst the *ṛṣis*, I am Narada; whatever is best, I shine in that.'

Krishna is not boasting that He is the best. All that He conveys is that whatever there is, is manifest in Himself. He is the very essence of Existence. As we saw earlier, the moon is not considered a star; even in the Hindu calendar the moon is not counted as a *nakṣatra*, a star. Mythologically the stars are considered the wives of the moon!

However, in terms of its influence upon our planet earth, and upon humans, the influence of the moon is next only to the sun. The gravitational pull of the moon creates and controls not only the tides of the oceans, but also the tides in the minds and hearts of humans. In this sense, Krishna declares Himself to be the moon amongst stars.

Now, Krishna goes beyond all verbal expressions of His glories. Enough words have been said. It is now time to demonstrate. Krishna proves who He is by giving a solid experience to Arjuna.

The difference between an enlightened person and an egoistic person is that an egoistic person also declares what he perceives to be a fact, but only the enlightened person can give the experience itself. A mortal can talk, that is all he can do. He has no experience to back it up with.

Whenever you go on about yourself, it is based on a collection of your emotions and memories; it is an expression of what you think you are and what you think you have experienced. That sort of expression may be based on fact, but it doesn't mean absolutely that it is a truth.

In the same way, we pride ourselves with all of our social conditionings, the value systems and beliefs. They become more and more real the more we think about them. Others who want our attention or some favour from us, join in and repeat all these wonderfully untrue things about us. We become convinced we are superhuman.

Our entire existence as we know it, is unreal. So therefore, what can be true about it? How can we boast and take credit for a life that we don't have any control over? We have no control over the next breath we take. We have no control over how long our loved ones will live. We have no control over what will happen during the course of our lives. Yet, we believe we are in control of the whole of our lives.

Hiranyakashipu, the Indian demon king, thought he was God and he made his subjects chant his name, '*Hiraṇyāya namaḥ*'. Krishna also stated that He was God. The difference between the two was that Hiranyakashipu could not give the experience to his subjects. He told them, 'Either believe that I am God or I will kill you!' He threatened his subjects into this behavior, whether or not they actually believed he was God. Please understand that conversion by blood or bread does not help. While both of them declared they were gods, Krishna could actually prove it. He could give the experience of universal consciousness to people!

Many religions have attempted this method of Hiranyakashipu in the past and continue even today to forcibly convert non-believers into their fold. For our inner Self to be convinced of the truth of someone's divinity there is no need for force; there is no need to use fear and greed. The Self knows. The Self cannot forget its origin. It cannot forget the divinity of which it is part. There is no need for force and violence. If a religion and its propagators need to resort to violence or enticement to communicate the truth of their beliefs to others, one of two things is true - they do not believe it themselves or what they believe is not worth following.

This truth of the divine Self is what Jesus referred to when He said to repent. The words 'to repent' in the ancient Aramaic language mean 'to go back to one's origin.' This is what the Sanskrit word *samādhī* means, 'to go back to one's original state.' This original state can never be forgotten and cannot be untruthfully represented.

This is where all proselytizing religions go wrong. They try to convert others by cajoling them or coercing them, by fear and greed, by the carrot and the stick. Humans are not donkeys. Truth can never be experienced through fear and greed. Even if false truths are propagated through such conversion tactics of fear and greed for centuries, the truth will win out one day. There is no other way.

No great master believed in spreading his words through fear and greed. All great masters spread their words through unconditional love and compassion. That is the only way truth can spread.

Unfortunately, the disciples who followed these spiritual masters were not always masters themselves. They were there to establish business practices in the form of religions. They were organizers, not leaders. Fear and greed became handy tools of organization and propagation, since these followers did not have the experience of truth within themselves.

Please understand that spirituality is truth. Great masters such as Buddha, Krishna, Jesus and such others stood for truth. But the religions that followed them only pretended to stand for them; they stood only for the masters and not for the truth the masters experienced and expressed.

These religions misrepresented facts that followers understood to be the truths that the masters revealed. These followers had no experience of the truth themselves. What they expressed was their understanding of what they believed was the truth they heard. These expressions were colored by their own ego and were transmuted to serve their personal interests.

On the other hand, the Sufis and Gnostics did not need religious interpretation to understand truth. Their hearts felt it. Their Self understood it. They scorned religious leaders who pretended to interpret the truth of their masters for them. 'Go away,' they said. 'We know the truth. We feel the truth. We do not need to hear from you. We don't need to read what you have written on behalf of the masters.' So they were persecuted.

How to find out whether a person is a master? How to establish whether a person is enlightened or just egoistic? This is the scale: If he can give the experience, then whatever comes from him is the truth. Here Krishna shows clearly that He *is* everything. He demonstrates His divinity to Arjuna. Krishna walks His talk in this chapter.

In the Bhagavatam (ancient Hindu epic) there is a beautiful verse that the *gopī* (cowherdess of Brindavan), sings to Krishna, who is everything to her clan:

*tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta jīvanam
kavibhirīritam kalmaṣāpaharṇ
śravaṇamaṅgalam śrīmadātātām
bhuvī grhṇanti te bhūrītā janāḥ*

'O Krishna, *tava kathāmṛtaṁ*...Your words and the words uttered about You are *kathāmṛtaṁ*, words of immortality, words of nectar, words both on You and by You. Just by listening to these words, You create auspiciousness in us.

'These words are worshipped and expressed as the highest truth by the great *ṛṣis*. We who have experienced You, feel the joy again and again by speaking about You. You rejuvenate our whole being. Just by listening to these words about You and by You, we are transported to a different plane.'

If you have fallen in love with Krishna, this is the chapter to know Him and enjoy Him. Here in this chapter He does not give any teachings. All intellectual teachings are over. Do's and don'ts, are all over. He gives the experience directly: 'I am Everything.' He gives the experience of the ultimate universal consciousness and the realization that He is present in everything. Arjuna experiences the universal consciousness. This whole chapter is pure experience.

The first thing we need to understand is whether it is possible to have the experience of the universal consciousness. Secondly, what is the basic qualification to experience it? Thirdly, what really happens inside our being during such an experience? These three things we shall understand from this chapter and explore the wonderful possibility of experiencing Krishna as the cosmic window.

In the previous chapter, Krishna gave the intellectual explanation that He is the Ultimate. More than an intellectual expression, I may say that this is an expression given to a person who is deeply in love. Krishna can be God only when a person achieves the maturity of Arjuna. The truth should be declared only when a person is qualified and mature. Only when you reach the maturity of Arjuna can you experience the divinity of Krishna. When you feel deeply connected to a person, he looks divine even though he may be quite ordinary in reality.

Shiva says in Tantra that when one drops one's fantasies, he becomes Shiva and his wife becomes Uma. He reaches the state of *Śivatva*, the state of Shiva, and she reaches the state of *Devi*.

Truth can only be expressed when the listener is ready. Look at what happened to Jesus. The Jews of His day crucified Jesus, as they were not ready to listen to His truth. The Jews of that time were egoistic and unprepared to accept what Jesus said. They were afraid that His teachings would destroy their livelihood. They preferred to live in bondage to the Romans rather than be liberated by the master's words.

In the case of Buddha, he was more fortunate. He escaped being killed. Out of the many thousands who heard Him, a few hundred understood and accepted what He said, and followed Him. Buddha left behind ten thousand followers while Jesus left behind twelve.

Krishna ruled by love. Though He was the king of the Yadava clan, he ruled not by authority and power, but by personal example and compassion. Those who lived with Him identified with Him, and loved Him beyond their own selves.

When the female *gopīs* bathed with Krishna in the river Yamuna, they had no sense of shame, since they had no body consciousness when they were around Krishna. Their entire awareness was merged with Krishna. They were one with Him, one with His cosmic consciousness. It did not even occur to them that they were without clothes. They had no fantasies. They were in the true reality of the Divine.

How does one attain enlightenment living a normal life?

In the Shiva Sutra, Shiva says there is nothing wrong with a husband and wife living a normal conjugal life, but they need to drop their fantasies about one another. He tells Devi that when a couple is in bed, there are four of them in bed, not just two. It is the wife and the husband's fantasy about the wife, sharing the bed with the husband and the wife's fantasy about her husband. It is only when the

two of them let go of their fantasies and see each other for who they really are, that a couple can be in love.

When we live without fantasies, the other person looks like God. Only then the other person is real. Please understand that everybody is God, including you. But each of us carries our own idea of God and tries to put everyone else into that frame. When they do not fit into the frame, we throw the person out instead of throwing the frame.

Shiva asks you to throw out the frame so that then you can see everybody as God. What does not fit is your frame, your ideas of how others should behave. Because the frame does not fit, you wish to change the face! It is like cutting the foot to fit the shoe! Alter the shoe, not the foot! You are intelligent if you do the latter, but what most of us do is the former.

We have our own imagination of how our wife, husband, son, daughter, brother, boss and friend should be. We try to fit them into that frame and suffocate them when they don't fit. That is why the other always suffocates us. That is why you need your space.

The space you require is the space for your fantasies. Over time this space becomes unlimited, because your fantasies grow. We cannot accept another person for what he or she is. The natural self of the other person threatens us. From childhood we have grown with ideas about what we should be and what everyone around us should be. We have clear ideas about how our would-be should be!

Our template gets drawn by listening to others and listening to the media. Then we piece it all together and frame it for our constant reference. Constantly we are comparing everyone to the fantasy we have built up in our minds.

These templates are so convoluted that no real person can match them. All our psychosomatic problems are built into these templates, and God's creatures have no chance of matching them at all. So we spend our lives chiseling those real people whom we meet, trying to get them to fit into our fantasy world. We create psychological wounds for them and for ourselves.

When you are deeply connected with the other person as they are, when you can accept anybody as he or she is, you establish a divine relationship. However, to do so, you must first learn to accept your own self as you are. When you are continuously engaged in chiseling, your job has no end. You can never be happy by

chiseling the outer image. You can be happy only by dropping the image, the template, about the other person.

A small story:

Once there lived a couple married for fifty years. They were being interviewed on television.

The interviewer asked the old man, 'How old is your wife?'

He replied, 'She is ninety-two and I hope she lives for a hundred and ten years.'

The interviewer asked, 'How old are you?'

The old man said, 'I am also ninety-two and I hope to live for hundred and eleven years.'

The interviewer was surprised and asked, 'Why do you want your wife to live to a hundred and ten years and you for hundred and eleven?'

The old man replied, 'To be honest I want atleast one year of peace!'

Just understand. When you try to chisel each other constantly, you will only cause unhappiness in your life. But when you accept everyone as they are, the whole world appears as God.

This can be achieved in two ways. Firstly, by your own *tapas*, your spiritual penance, you acquire maturity by undergoing this experience repeatedly. You need to keep dropping your fantasies about other people. You need to stop creating fantasies about others, and accept them for what they are.

Secondly, a master can also give you this experience by infusing tremendous energy in you, by bringing you to his own frequency. But even to retain the energy of the master, you need a certain level of maturity. This is what happens here in this chapter. The frequency of Krishna's cosmic form is too much for Arjuna to bear and he cries out to Krishna to resume his normal form.

A small example: The other day I was watching the disaster of Hurricane Katrina in the USA on television when one of the *ashramites* asked me why such calamities were taking place.

I tried to explain to them that it is something like driving your car or SUV and incidentally it goes over a small anthill. As far as the ants are concerned this is a

natural calamity for them. They may call it 'Hurricane SUV!' But as far as you are concerned you are not even aware of this disaster. You are just driving the SUV. Can you relate with the ants in this incident or say that driving over their anthill was pre-destined?

Their logic and yours are completely different. Neither can they question you nor can you answer them.

So when we question Hurricane Katrina, it is like an ant questioning the SUV car owner! We can only conclude, 'This is all God's will.' The kind of explanation any organized religion gives is also this! No organized religion can ever give a reasonable answer to such happenings. No logical answer or explanation can ever be given for these experiences. No justification can be given that it is pre-destined and such. There is no logical answer as to why thousands of people die for no reason.

The frequency, logic, perception and concepts of the ants are completely different from ours, just as ours is again completely different from the cosmic consciousness. Just like how you do not even know that your vehicle has killed thousands of ants, the cosmic energy or consciousness is not even aware of a happening like Hurricane Katrina! The frequency of this consciousness is in a completely different dimension. From the cosmic level, what happened in New Orleans is something like a mug of water spilling onto an anthill, washing away the ants.

It is not possible to comprehend what that level or frequency is. What is possible is for us to raise the frequency of our will or consciousness to be one with It, to learn to live with It and experience It. Neither God nor your wife can be understood; just learn to live with them!

The ants cannot question you as to why you spilled the mug of water on them. If their level of frequency is 10, your level is 100, and the universal consciousness is infinity. Logically, nothing can be done. Please understand, anyone who is trying to give a logical explanation is simply cheating. Anyone who attempts to explain logically why there are so many natural calamities, why death, why the misfortunes in life, why someone is high or low, has simply created one more philosophy.

If the person is charismatic, has a way with words, he will have created a new philosophy and cheated a group of people. One does not need to be very intelligent to cheat people because people are not as intelligent as you think! This is probably why great philosophers convince others, but they themselves are not convinced.

I know a great atheist who chanted God's name when he lay dying! The very act of trying to convince and convert others testified to the fact that he was not convinced himself.

Please be aware that conversion is an intellectual and psychological crime. A converted person has one face superficially and his internal unconscious being is not in tune with it. The two conflict with each other and he becomes a schizophrenic. And preachers who convert others without any deep, personal experience of the divine, always fall into the worst kind of depression. They punish themselves by their own acts.

One person from Oklahoma who was associated with us was a reverend of the clergy. He enjoyed our programs and eventually went on to become a teacher of our meditation programs. I had never asked him to convert himself to our religion. To begin with, I myself do not have any religion! There is no need because what I teach is pure *satya*, the truth.

It is like this: The light bulb was invented by Thomas Edison. We cannot say that the light bulb belongs only to Christianity, since Edison happened to be a Christian! It belongs to humanity. Similarly the truth of the inner light given by Krishna, like the light bulb, belongs to humanity and not to any particular religion. It is not necessary to convert to any religion. It is enough if you understand the truth and live your life happily and intensely.

I met a preacher engaged in violent conversion of people in India. Not having had the experience of truth himself, this preacher who was engaged in converting others, had fallen into depression. He wanted to meet with me in private, so I agreed.

He wanted healing from me and after a few days of healing, he felt much better. I asked him the reason why he was engaged in such a violent practice. He replied that when he spoke, so many people listened to him and this gave him a sense of power. He then felt convinced that what he was teaching was the truth! I share this incident to show that when a person preaches without experience, he is simply trying to solidify his own confidence. Don't be fooled.

People who are trying to convert others into their faiths by greed and fear have no faith in themselves. If they did, there would be no need to convert others. Their own faith would transform others and make them realize the truth of their experience. Instead, somewhere deep inside them, they believe they are sinners. So they are keen to prove to others that they too are sinners, whether they wish to believe this or not.

Please understand, every one of you is divine! You are all cast in the mold of the Almighty. All you need is this awareness that you too are divine.

But then, religions cannot benefit materially from such an attitude. They cannot control people by telling them they are divine. They can only control them by saying they are sinners. Only then can they wield power over others and accumulate wealth.

Spiritual truths should transform, not convert. Spiritual truths should make a Christian a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim and a Hindu a better Hindu. Those who try to force others into converting their religion, by convincing them that they are sinners, are the biggest sinners themselves. They have no redemption.

That is the difference between Krishna, the incarnation, and Hiranyakashipu, the demon. Here the difference between Krishna and Hiranya, is that the latter tries to preach and convince others of his ideas and convert them to be his followers. He is just trying to play the game when he himself does not have the experience. Krishna gives the experience directly. When He declares that He is God, it is not for Him to satisfy His ego but for us to experience the truth. He tells Arjuna that He is uttering these words for Arjuna's sake.

Let us now go into the verses and examine three questions:

Can universal consciousness be experienced? What is the basic qualification for this experience? What happens when one experiences it?

These three questions are explained beautifully by Krishna in this chapter.

Q: Swamiji, you mentioned somewhere that Christ is not a Christian and Buddha is not a Buddhist. Can you elaborate?

Every religion has been the expression of the intense personal experience of a master. It is his unique way of expressing his own experience. The experience is the same but the expressions vary. The underlying truth in all these expressions is also the same.

Every master, whether Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Jesus or anyone else, preached the same message. We hear it differently. We attach the label of

Christianity to the expressions of Jesus and Buddhism to the teachings of Buddha. We add our own labels to the same truth to make them different and even conflicting.

To give ourselves something to do, we fight, maim and kill in the name of the master. Has there been a master who said to kill in the name of his experience? If he did, then he is not a master.

The expression of Jesus that became Christianity did not belong to Jesus alone. It was a universal truth propounded by Him, based on His experience. Similarly, Buddha expressed His experiences and they became the religion of Buddhism. Buddhism does not belong to Buddha alone. These spiritual truths expressed by the great masters are universal truths, which belong to all of humanity. These masters are expressions of energy that transcends forms and labels.

Stop thinking you are a Christian and that you are a follower of Jesus. Read the Bible and assimilate the truth of the expressions of Jesus, as if these are the truths expressed by Buddha. Follow the expressions of Buddha as if they are the truths expressed in the Koran.

You will then realize that there is no difference between these universal truths. Jesus did not create the trademark of Christianity. His followers did, many centuries after his death. Buddha condemned ritualistic worship. Yet his followers have turned him into a God and worship his idols!

In the name of their masters, these followers fought with one another and killed one another. The spiritual expressions of the founding masters have become a profitable business for their followers.

I say that if Jesus and Krishna meet each other, they will hug each other and be blissful. However, the cows of Krishna and the sheep of Jesus will fight with each other as to whose master is greater!



I Wish To See Your Divine Form

11.1 Arjuna says: O Lord! By listening to Your wisdom on the supreme secret of Existence and Your glory, I feel that my delusion has disappeared.

11.2 O Krishna! I have heard from You about the creation and destruction of all beings,

Also Your inexhaustible greatness.

11.3 Purushottama! You have declared what You are, O Lord supreme,

I wish to see the divine form of Yours.

11.4 If You think it is possible for me to see it, then please, O Lord of Yoga and all mystic power,

Show me Your form of eternal universal Self.

In the minds of many, Krishna is considered an incarnation. It is in this chapter that Krishna reveals Himself as not just an incarnation but as also the very source from which everything flows. He is the source of all sources, the cause of all causes, the source of all the worlds and universes.

Arjuna has already heard from Krishna about everything that he needs to do. Arjuna's questions have all disappeared; his doubts and delusions have dissolved. In the previous chapter, Krishna explains to Arjuna who He really is.

It is not that Arjuna is not aware of the greatness of Krishna and His divinity. It is based on his deep faith in Krishna that Arjuna chose to have the master assist him unarmed as his charioteer, while Duryodhana chose Krishna's vast Yadava army.

Despite the faith that Arjuna has in Krishna, he has doubts too. Doubts and faith are two sides of the same coin. You cannot have one without the other. At the intellectual level, Arjuna had shed his doubts. At the emotional level he had shed his doubts. But at the being level, at the very core of his being, Arjuna was still troubled by what he was about to do.

His chariot placed facing the Kaurava army, facing the teachers who had taught him all he knew, elders and relatives whom he loved dearly, Arjuna was overcome with deep doubts. 'What is the meaning of all this?' he asks. 'Why should I destroy all those whom I have so far revered and loved? What do I seek in return? What purpose will it serve even if I achieve what I seek?'

Arjuna has no one else to ask but Krishna. Intuitively Arjuna sees his own Self in Krishna. *Nara*, the man, meets *Narayana*, the Divine. Arjuna knows at the depths of his being that Krishna and Krishna alone can provide the answers to the doubts that have risen within him.

Arjuna is the quintessential thinking man. Unlike his brother Bhima and cousin Duryodhana, Arjuna is deeply troubled by what he perceives as right and wrong. His responses are those of intelligence, not animal instinct. Arjuna is able to see that what his senses tell him need not be true. He realizes that he needs discrimination, *viveka*, in sensory inputs, to separate facts from truth.

Step by step, Krishna clears Arjuna's doubts. First, Krishna addresses Arjuna's doubts of the intellect. Krishna explains to him the misconceptions that Arjuna has from the literal reading of the scriptures and what he has understood to be right and wrong. 'All the people in front of you are already dead,' says the Lord, 'I eliminated them long ago; why are you then worried? Do what you need to do.'

Krishna then clears any lingering emotional doubts that Arjuna may have by explaining to him what He, the master of the universe, is all about. He tells Arjuna who He really is. After detailing all His glories, Krishna says that there is no end to His divine manifestations. Wherever there is something glorious, powerful and prosperous, Krishna is in existence. Krishna concludes, saying that there is no need for detailed knowledge, and that He supports all of Existence within a fragment of His divine Self.

And now, finally, the time has come for Arjuna to see Krishna as He truly is. Arjuna is standing on the last step. He beseeches, 'My delusion has been dispelled and I am now aware of Your divinity. Please show me now who You really are.'

And yet, Arjuna still hesitates. He wants to know, but he is not sure if he can bear to experience the truth. He says one phrase clearly, 'If you think I can behold Your form,' which indicates that there is already some fear in him.

He also has doubts. Yes, Krishna said that He had already destroyed all of Arjuna's enemies. But physically they are in front of Arjuna. He believes what Krishna says. But his senses tell him a different story.

It is not important what others think; what is important is what *we* think. *We* should be ready to take the responsibility and face whatever comes. Even simple truths or experiences cannot be given so easily, since the receiver must have the maturity to hold what he has received.

In one of our publications titled, '*Swamiji as We Know Him*,' there is a chapter, 'In the Arms of the Master.' It tells the story of how one of the devotees was constantly nagging me for an experience, much like Arjuna asks here. I advised the person to meditate but the person insisted on a personal experience. The experience is not like a coconut to be given away! The receiver has to have the maturity to hold it. This went on for six months and she would not listen; she kept on asking. Then I eventually decided it was time.

In the narration of the account, she says that she felt her base itself being shaken, she felt herself being without boundary and cried out to me to stop because she could not take it anymore. For two days she was bedridden and she went on to say that I was thoughtless to have given her what I did!

In 2005, during the pilgrimage to the *cār dhām* (sacred sites) in the Himalayas, a devotee from the USA kept asking me for a *darśan* of Mahavatar Baba. Mahavatar Baba, the *parama guru* of Paramahansa Yogananda, lives eternally in these parts of the Himalayas. He blessed me with my name before my Self Realization, so He is, in fact, the *parama guru* of my lineage. I said to her that there was nothing I could do but if she had faith, He would appear. When she was riding a pony on the way from Gaurikund to Kedar, she saw Baba passing by. When she told me about this, I felt her hand and found that she had indeed had an experience. I told her that she would be experiencing the effects of that energy for quite some time. For six months her body was adjusting to that intense energy experience. She was healed when I visited the USA on my next trip, after about six months!

Here Arjuna says, 'If you think I can behold your cosmic form, My Lord, show me Your unmasked, manifested universal Self.' Please understand, before entering into the experience you must have the courage to take whatever comes.

There are people I know, who after meditating for about a year, start experiencing the state of boundarilessness. They get frightened and shaken and afraid of losing themselves. I tell them that the meditation itself was to give them the experience of boundarilessness. It is like taking all the trouble to invite a guest to your house and when he does arrive, you are surprised at his arrival! Invariably when people have the experience for the first time, they are shaken and try to escape.

In many instances, during the darkness meditations in the first level and second level meditation programs, people come to the point of losing their body consciousness. They get scared and refuse to go along with the experience. After the meditation session is over, they tell me what happened. By then it is too late, they have missed the opportunity!

This is also the case with people who practice chanting intensely. When the Divine starts giving them the experience, they are shaken by fear and stop. When you are meditating on the Divine, a chant or God, do not try to escape when you get the vision or *darśan*. Please understand that the Divine will never disturb you, only your fear disturbs you. When you have the experience, have the courage to go with it. With the Divine, nothing is too much.

Ramakrishna asks Vivekananda, 'If you see the *amṛtasāgara*, the ocean of nectar, how will you drink from it?'

Vivekananda says he would become a fly, sit by the edge of the ocean and begin to drink it slowly. Ramakrishna says, 'Fool! Jump into it and drink!'

Vivekananda fears that he would die if he did that. Ramakrishna says beautifully, 'It is the ocean of nectar, how will you die?'

Amṛta means nectar, that which guarantees immortality. By drinking it you cannot die. How would you die by jumping into the ocean of immortality?

Therefore, don't worry about overdoing anythings in spirituality. There is nothing called too much in spiritual energy and spiritual experience. There can never be too much of *bhakti* or devotion, too much of the Divine, too much of spirituality or bliss.

Here, Arjuna says, 'If you think I can behold your cosmic form...' Arjuna wants the experience but puts the responsibility on Krishna. He wants the sweet but not diabetes! Of course, the divine sweet can never make you a diabetic.

I had occasion to visit Melkote, the place where Ramanujacharya the Indian saint had lived.

The *prasād* (food offered to the Lord and distributed to the people) was so tasty and intensely sweet. I feared that the devotees would have become diabetic but was surprised when I was told there was no diabetic in the entire village, although everyone consumed the *prasād* daily! Understand, food offered to God gets energized and becomes *amṛta* or nectar. What we chant while offering the *prasād* cleanses and energizes it.

I would like to tell you about important research done on water. I have mentioned this before but it is so important that it is worth repeating here.

In the movie, 'What the Bleep Do We Know?' the recently released book, *The Hidden Messages in Water*, is discussed. A Japanese doctor Dr. Masaru Emoto experimented by speaking positive words like *peace*, *bliss* and *happiness* sitting in front of a few glasses of water labeled with these words. He then spoke negative words like *war*, *violence* and *anger* to other glasses containing similar water samples that were labeled with these negative words.

He then froze all these glasses of water and photographed the ice crystals as seen under a microscope. The results were startling. Those ice crystals from the water that received positive messages appeared as clear as jewels, as beautiful as diamonds! The ice crystals from the water that received negative messages were ugly to look at.

Masaru Emoto repeated these experiments hundreds of times to prove that our thoughts affect water. This is why masters from ancient times taught people to chant *mantras* standing in the sacred river Ganga. The whole river would be energized by the energy of millions of devotees chanting!

The water brought by the Englishmen from Britain in the days of East India Company would usually get spoil within a month when they came to India. However, the water carried back with them from Calcutta (Ganga water) would stay fresh even they reached England!

Research conducted on this showed that water from the Ganga had the ability to purify itself. This is why the Ganga is never polluted despite so much polluting material being dumped into it.

Likewise, when food is put before the deity in a temple where *mantras* are chanted constantly, the food absorbs the pure, spiritual energy. It starts radiating the energy of the divine positive qualities. One cannot fall sick by eating *prasād*.

With divine energy, the effect is always positive, never negative. You cannot die in the *amṛtasāgara*, the ocean of nectar. When it comes to the Divine, all you need to do is jump into It with your whole being. All you need to do is to relax into It for transformation.

Arjuna says:

*manyase yadi tacchakhyam
mayā draṣṭumiti prabho
yogeshwara tato me tvam
darśayātmānamavyayam*

‘If You think I am able to behold, O My Lord, master of all mystic power, please show me Your cosmic form.’

Many of you are like Arjuna. In fact, all of you are like Arjuna. You do not wish to take any risks. The master has to calculate all the risks for you. You want the master to make the experience risk-free, safe and pleasant. Unfortunately, it does not work that way. Yes, the experience is bliss, it is liberating, but that blissful experience destroys your identity, kills the ego and recreates the Divine in you.

If you wish to be as you were, do not ask for the experience. The master’s job is to transform. The master is a surgeon, the surgeon of egos. Once you come to Him, it is a point of no return. I tell people that once they enter the gates of the ashram, they have made a life-long, no-return commitment. Even if they go out, they cannot get me out!

There is no such thing as partial surrender to a master. There is no such thing as, ‘Please give me what I can take. Let me take a sip and see if I like it. If I do I shall ask You for more. If not, I shall not take anymore.’

Of course, the master knows your readiness far better than you do. That is why I work on you in stages. As long as you are not ready, what I give you is brain and eye candy, that’s all. You can gaze in happiness and go away. The form is all that you can take. It is only when your seriousness of purpose is established that I can start working on you without fear that you will run away from the operating table.

Till then you only behave under the delusion that you have surrendered. It is one more fantasy, that is all.

On one of our Himalayan trips, I decided not to trek to Gomukh, the origin of Ganga, which is at over 13,000 feet altitude. We stopped at Gangotri. I told the

group that I was not willing to go further since there could be snow slides. But I told them that if any one of them felt adventurous and that they must go, they could carry on. My body language clearly indicated they should not go, as it was not safe. But I needed to give them their space and let them decide.

A dozen people trekked to Gomukh the next morning, without even informing the group leaders. This caused not only confusion but also concern, as there was land and snow slides on the way. That evening, when asked by the group leaders why they went despite the cautions, one of the people who went said he had surrendered to me, and that I would take care!

This is not surrender. This is ego, negative ego! You make the master responsible for your idiotic behavior. If there were a true spirit of surrender, these people would have listened when I warned them not to go.

The *brahmacāris* who train at the ashram understand the power of the master's words. They listen and listen completely. They listen without applying logic and reason. Logic and reason come with ego. To be egoless, you need to be mindless and shed logic.

Arjuna is an evolved disciple. What he says only seems to reflect what an ordinary person would have said. In fact, what Arjuna implies here is far more. 'Please give me Your cosmic vision,' Arjuna pleads, 'if it may please You. I am keen to have it, but the decision is Yours. Let whatever You decide happen!'

This is what my initiated healers do when they heal. They drop my form, they drop their ego and they also drop the intention to heal. All they say is, 'Let whatever good may happen, happen.' The healing energy of the cosmos is intelligent and it flows where it should, when it should, and does what it needs to do.

Arjuna is in the same mood. 'Let what happens be decided by You,' he says to Krishna. What he implies is this: 'I have heard all that You have said. My questions have disappeared and my delusions have evaporated. I truly understand Your greatness. May I see You in Your true form?'

'I have no right to ask all this of You. It is not any penance I may have done that makes me deserve this. It is not that I have reached a level of intellectual understanding of You that makes me deserve this. It is not that I have reached the peak of devotion that makes me deserve Your vision. I have no right to demand. However, in all humility, as Your devotee, as one who surrenders to You, I ask of

You to show me who You really are. Please show me Your entire splendor, Your valor, Your wisdom, Your truth and all that You really are!’

Q: Swamiji, I am confused. Surrender itself means that you leave the decision to the master. But I hear you say that when someone leaves that decision to You, they do it out of ego. I do not understand.

Please understand this. If you have truly surrendered yourself to me, as Arjuna does to Krishna when he asks for the cosmic Vision, you will not complain later if you lose your eyes!

That is the difference.

All disciples claim that they have surrendered. When I tell them to come and stay at the ashram, they will find a hundred excuses. I am telling them to stay at the ashram for their benefit, not because living with these people makes my life any better. All the talk about surrender is theoretical. All that surrender evaporates the moment some material benefit is being violated, or even thought to be violated.

I do know where each one of my disciples is and how far they can go, how far they can be pushed to realize their potential. When many of them want to be *ashramites* or want to wear saffron, that is why I decline. I decline out of compassion because they are not ready. But some keep insisting. They insist they have what it takes. Ultimately you have to decide your destiny. So, I relent and oblige.

Some of you grasp that little finger and swim ashore. You have that courage, that determination to make it happen. That is your miracle; I am only a guide. But many of you ask to be carried. That is not possible. Unless you make it with your own steam, the path becomes worthless. Of course, even what you think is your effort is not your effort. But what you think is what matters.

You may have read this story before, ‘Footprints on the Sand,’ a truly beautiful story.

A man was stranded in the desert and was desperate. He cried to Jesus for help: ‘Please carry me out of this desert!’ There was no answer. He plodded on and on. Finally he reached the end of the desert.

He then complained to Jesus: 'Master, you were so unkind. When I needed You most, You never responded. I hoped You would support me. I kept looking for Your footprints on the sand, beside mine. But I saw only one set of footprints. Where were You when I needed You?'

A voice rang out, 'You fool! I was the one who carried you. The footprints you saw were Mine.'

God does not leave a visiting card for you. He does not want anything from you. He knows that you rarely express gratitude. You will complain if you don't get what you want, but you will never remember to thank Him!



The Divine Eye

11.5 Bhagavan said:

*O Partha, behold My hundreds and thousands of forms,
Of different divine sorts, of various colors and shapes.*

*11.6 O Bharata, see the Aditya, the Vasu, the Rudra, the Ashvin, the Marut and
Many wonders you have never seen before.*

*11.7 O Arjuna, see now in My body, all the moving and the unmoving,
Whatever else you wish to see, everything integrated into this body.*

*11.8 But you cannot see Me with these your physical eyes. Let Me give you the
divine eye; behold My divine power!*

In this verse, Krishna summarizes the entire chapter as He explains the whole *darśan* (Vision). It needs to be read and understood as one verse.

Krishna says, 'O Partha, behold the hundreds and thousands of my divine forms. These are diverse divine forms, of diverse colors, shapes and sizes. O Bharata, see the different manifestations of Aditya, Vasu, Rudra, Ashvini Kumara, Marut and many wonderful beings whom no one has ever seen before.'

But before He gives *darśan* of the universal form, He makes an important and beautiful statement, 'O Arjuna! You cannot see my form with ordinary eyes. To behold this form, you would need *divya netra*, the third eye or the divine eye.

'*Divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ...*' Let me give you the divine eye to enable you to see and experience Me.' From this verse He starts giving the *Viśvarūpa darśana* - Vision of His Cosmic Form.

Krishna says, 'O Arjuna, may you start seeing whatever exists, the *sthāvara* and the *jaṅgama* (immovable and movable), the universe that no ordinary man can see. Even the great sages have not seen this sight and are not aware of it.'

Arjuna was an intimate friend of Krishna and their attachment to each other as friends was deep. They had known each other from their early years and even though Krishna was close to all the Pandava brothers and also the Kaurava, His bond with Arjuna was special. Over and above their friendship, Arjuna was a very intelligent and learned man in his own right.

But neither the deep friendship nor his intelligence or wisdom could give Arjuna any idea of the real nature, the true nature of Krishna, and about His many facets. There are so many forms and manifestations of the different energies that humans have not even heard of. Krishna, in His infinite compassion and love for Arjuna, shows him all these wonderful forms.

Here is a wonderful phenomenon. With all the advancements made in science today, man can see what is happening even in the remote corners of the planet earth. You know, there is a beautiful software available called Google Earth. With this, you can see your own house even if it is in some remote village of India. You can see Bidadi ashram. You can see everything. But there is no software, no telescope or equipment invented so far, by which man can see what is happening in other parts of the universe.

Now Krishna gives Arjuna the power to see what is happening in the whole universe, not only in the present, but in the past and the future also!

Here again are the three questions that are the essence of the whole chapter.

Can the divine form be seen?

What is the qualification to see the divine form?

What really happens when you see the divine form?

I tell you categorically – it is possible to see the divine form. There are many enlightened masters who have experienced this consciousness.

Let me give you an instance from my life.

After nine long years of penance, I was completely frustrated at one point. I wondered if I was wasting my whole life reading books, following what the earlier masters said and applying them in my life. I wondered, was there really something

called enlightenment or was it a waste of my whole life? At one point I began to fear that I had wasted the very essence of my life, my youth, by pouring all of it into *tapas* or penance. Was it really worth the sacrifice?

All of a sudden at one point in time, I felt myself going into deep depression. Actually, I later realized that this was not depression. It was a desperate situation, a deep personal quest, and an urge to do or die. Now I know that one needs to reach this stage before one can realize the truth.

Whatever had to be done as spiritual penance, I had done and had not left even an inch untried. For example, at one point in time, I created a wall of fire six feet in diameter, sat inside it and chanted continuously so that I would not fall asleep. In this way, I had tried hundreds of techniques to the best of my ability. Since nothing was still happening to me, I concluded that there was either no such thing as enlightenment or it was something I could not achieve.

I strongly began to think that enlightenment was simply something that some people were cheating humanity with, for their own ego-fulfillment. I began to doubt and lose faith in the whole system. The photo of Ramakrishna, who had all along been my inspiration, the photo I used to worship everyday, I threw away in disgust, depression and anger and with such force that the glass frame broke.

At that time I was staying in Omkareshwar, in a forest in Madhya Pradesh, on the banks of the holy river Narmada. I had my rosary, with which I used to say my prayers or do my penance for hours together. It was my constant companion and was something to which I had given utmost respect, almost like my life-line.

In my anger and depression, I threw the rosary into the river Narmada and cast the *mantra* out of my mind. I decided, 'No more meditation, no more spirituality. Enough!' I had had enough of the game being played by the so-called enlightened masters. I simply threw everything away, dropped everything.

I then walked into the river Narmada with my eyes closed. The river was at least sixty feet deep at that point. I just kept walking with my eyes closed. Fear gripped me but I continued. When I opened my eyes, I was on the opposite bank of the river! Till date I have no idea what happened. I have no idea whether there were rocks all along the path I walked on the river, or whether I floated or whether the river parted. But I did not have the resolve to walk back through the river again, that much I know! To return to the point I started from, I had to walk to the nearest bridge, many miles away!

The seventh day after this incident, I joined the masters in their game! The experience of enlightenment and cosmic consciousness simply happened to me. It never left me afterwards.

So to answer this question, 'Can this be experienced?', the definitive answer is *yes*. As a person who was just like you, I tell you out of courtesy the simple truth, 'Yes, honestly, it can be experienced.'

This is the solid truth; a promise that this can be experienced. Please understand, I have no vested interest in convincing you of this ideology. All I have is simple courtesy, like informing a friend of the traffic situation in a particular place and guiding him through a different route.

It is definitely possible to experience this truth, this cosmic form, in our lives. Never think, 'This is not for me.' It is for everybody! However, unless you are sure of the possibility of having this beautiful, intense experience, listening to all this is a waste of time. If you think this is one more story, do not waste your time here.

The first thing that you need to know is that it *is* possible. Only then what Krishna says will work on our being. I will be really happy if you go out after experiencing this cosmic form. At least go out with a glimpse of it. If these words of Krishna are to work on you, you must first be convinced of the possibility of it happening to you and know that these are not just words. Let me tell you openly and directly, from my experience, 'It *is* possible.'

These words of Krishna are not mere words; they are not mere scriptural words. These words are techniques that go deep inside you and work on you with amazing results. All that you need is complete trust in the master that what He says will happen. I promise you it will.

Next, what is the qualification?

Basically, by giving this experience to Arjuna, Krishna proves that there is no need for any qualification because Arjuna himself has no qualification. Arjuna neither took the responsibility nor understood fully the teachings of Krishna. He was simply fortunate to be in the presence of Krishna, that's all. Likewise, you too are fortunate to be here and not caught in some traffic jam! There were thousands of possibilities for you to be elsewhere; so many options were available to you. But out of all of them, you chose to be here. This is the only qualification required.

In fact, you are the Arjuna who missed Krishna in an earlier form. You are here now, listening or reading, not by any mere accident or divine coincidence. You are

here now for a reason. That is qualification enough. Make sure that you do not miss Krishna again this time!

By coming here every day, your unconscious and subconscious mind has already accepted whatever is being said here. If this had not happened, you would not return here the following day. You would not be listening to or reading this chapter.

A person told me that when he woke up every day for these few days, he found himself waiting for 5:30 in the evening so that he could attend the discourse! If you are waiting, it means that all these words have already entered your being. So have the trust that you are ready for this experience.

One of the problems is that even if you are qualified, you do not have the trust or belief that you are qualified! This is because society and religious preachers have blamed you continuously for many things and created a kind of guilt in you.

Because of this you have lost faith and confidence in yourself. Now, after having listened for all these days, your still being here is proof that your unconscious mind has accepted these ideas. Your conscious mind may struggle with the question of why you are here, but the fact that you are here shows that unconsciously you have begun enjoying these ideas.

You are fortunate to fall in tune with the great thought of Krishna. After understanding the verse, we will enter into a meditation to have at least a glimpse of what the cosmic *Krishna* gave Arjuna. Arjuna had no qualification to receive what he got from Krishna. When He could give it to Arjuna, why not to us?

First, we acknowledge the possibility of having the experience. We have all understood that it is possible to have it. Next, the qualification: we have all understood that simply by being here we are qualified for the experience.

Somebody once asked Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi, enlightened master from India, what was the qualification for enlightenment. Bhagavan replied that merely being alive, simply existing, was the only qualification required!

At the most, the only qualification can be said to be openness. If you did not have it, you would not come here every day. We never allow the belief that we have the qualification to enter into our being. I tell you, drop everything! You are qualified by your very presence here!

Next, what happens when you have the experience?

Krishna's words:

*na tu mām śakyase draṣṭum
anenaiva svacakṣuṣā ।
divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ
paśya me yogamaīśwaraṁ ॥ 11.8*

‘Arjuna, you cannot see Me with these ordinary eyes. You need the divine eye, the third eye, *divyacakṣu*. To see My cosmic form, I give you the divine eye.’

What is this divine eye?

Let me tell you my experience that happened when I was twelve years old.

During that age, I used to do a particular meditation, or rather, I used to play with a technique given to me by a master. When I was about ten years old the great master Annamalai Swamigal, disciple of Ramana Maharshi, first taught me the technique of exploring to see where thoughts originated.

Once when I visited him with my parents, he was addressing a group of seekers and was saying, ‘We are not the body, we are *ātman*, the spirit. No pain or suffering touches us.’

I wondered how this could be, for if my mother beat me, I could feel the pain! (In India, if kids were mischievous, they would be roundly beaten, you could not call 911!) To experiment, I went home and cut my thigh with a knife to see if I had pain or not. I bled profusely.

Naturally, it not only hurt me, but I had to be taken to the hospital for the wound to be stitched, with more scolding from my mother! I had both pain and suffering. I wondered why this Swami had taught us such a thing as ‘no suffering or pain’!

Experimenting on others was easy. Arjuna was intelligent. After understanding everything, he started killing others; he never experimented on himself!

I approached the Swami and related what had happened to me.

First he asked me, ‘Did I ask you to go and cut yourself?’

He then made a profound statement that transformed my life. He said, ‘You may have pain and suffering now, but do not worry. Your attitude of analyzing and searching for the truth, your courage to experiment with truth, will liberate you from all pains, so go ahead!’

He then advised me to start searching for the source of my thoughts. Of course, at that age I was only irritated by his comments and my attention was on the fruits and sweets that devotees had brought him. I was hoping he would give me some in consolation! Honestly, I neither understood nor was convinced of what he said.

However, after a few days I began to playfully and casually try out the technique of trying to see the origin of my thoughts. I did not do this with any expectation or idea. All I knew was what the Swami had told me - that I would go beyond pain or suffering if I did this technique. I had no concept of God, *Brahman*, *ātman* or *jñāna*.

One evening, at the foothills of the sacred Arunachala hill, I was sitting on a rock known locally as the Coral Rock, trying out the same technique with eyes closed. I had fallen into deep meditation.

After some time, suddenly something opened, something seemed to happen inside my being, a feeling of being pulled or sucked inside.

The next moment it was as if a door had opened inside me, and I had complete 360-degree vision, both laterally and vertically. I could see on all four sides - the temple that was behind me, the hill that was in front of me, and the city that was on my left and right. I could see vertically too - the sky, the rock on which I was sitting, again the temple behind me.

For normal people who have only a maximum of 120-degree vision, I know this is very difficult to comprehend. All I can do is promise solemnly that it did happen! No other intellectual explanation is possible. Not only was I able to see all around, I was also able to feel that whatever I was seeing was Me. Whether they were plants or rocks or the city or the hill, whatever I could see, I felt they were all just Me. The experience was so intense and ecstatic that it was more than three or four hours before I opened my eyes. I felt feverish with bliss and this mood continued for three days.

But after this I was overtaken by a fear that there was something wrong with me. I thought a ghost had possessed me and I decided never to go to that rock again. I even began to avoid that route, which I normally took. I related my experience to an elderly *sanyāsini* who was my mentor. She held my hand and seeing the energy, exclaimed, 'You are not possessed by any ghost. You are possessed by God!' She encouraged me to continue with meditation but I never dared to do so for the next six months and was even afraid to close my eyes!

I related my experience to a close friend of mine. I told him about my 360-degree vision and my not knowing what was happening to me, etc. He did not believe me until I proved it to him by telling him about an ant climbing up the tree *behind* me, and correctly telling which side of the coin that he hid in his hand was exposed. He ran away from me in terror!

He was in the ashram recently and said to one of the *ashramites*, 'I was the first person to receive energy *darśan* from him, but I missed it!'

But despite the fear I experienced, the whole body was bubbling with joy and ecstasy.

So welcome was the feeling, that I had a small temptation to go to the rock again. I never really understood what had happened. A year later another enlightened person gave me the explanation; the seeking, however, started after this experience. Nine years of penance followed. All this penance was in order to have this experience again. When it did come the next time, both body and mind were ready and the experience stayed within my being.

The vision of 360 degrees is what Krishna means by *divyacakṣu*, *trinetra*, divine eye or third eye, also called *ājñā cakra*. When this eye opens you will see 360 degrees not only in the horizontal but in the vertical dimension too. You will see the whole Existence as You and experience it as You. This experience is what Krishna calls cosmic consciousness.

I felt that everything I saw around me was living, just as how we feel our living bodies, expanding the body consciousness to the universal consciousness. When you feel the whole universe as you would your own body, it can be called a cosmic experience. Unfortunately, we do not feel alive even within our own bodies!

Just as I was frightened when I had my first experience, Arjuna too was frightened when he started seeing Krishna's cosmic form. In such instances, a living master is required for help and guidance. I am often asked this question, 'Who was your master?,' to which I reply, 'Arunachala.' Arunachala, the sacred hill of Tiruvannamalai, my birthplace, is a living master. For a premature baby to survive, it must be put into the incubator. Similarly, Arunachala is the incubator for the enlightened person-to-be. The energy of Arunachala takes care just by your being near it.

'Let me give you the third eye, to enable you to experience the universal consciousness.'

You need to understand that after this verse, neither Krishna nor Arjuna speaks. Suddenly, it is Sanjaya who is speaking. After the first chapter in Bhagavad Gita until now, there is no word from Sanjaya. But here it is he who is speaking. This is a symbolic representation.

Arjuna is unable to speak because he is in the ecstatic experience. Krishna does not speak because his voice is beyond audibility. His voice is in the cosmic frequency, which is not audible to us. So Sanjaya interprets.

Q: Swamiji, You have said that God is bliss, and God is love. So, when we experience bliss and love, are we God too?

Yes, when you experience true love and true bliss you are in God consciousness, there is no doubt about it.

All great masters say God is love personified. We do not know God. God is absolutely a stranger. When we utter the word 'God' it is hollow and empty because we have not experienced anything of God. But the word 'love' is full of meaning; it is warm. Love is something we have experienced at one time or another, even if inadequately. God is a mere concept to all of us; there is no experience.

There is something of love that has been experienced by everybody. It may not be in its purest form, it may be much adulterated; but water is water even though it is muddy, and love is love even though it is full of lust. Something of the Divine remains always present in it. However dark the night is, a ray of light is still light and not darkness. So it is with love.

Love more and you will be coming closer and closer to the understanding of cosmic consciousness. Being a Christian or Hindu achieves nothing. One simply follows a dead dogma. But by being in love with a master, when you are in love with God, something certainly opens up in you and your heart starts growing. And when the heart blooms in its absolute glory, you are Christ or Krishna.

I am not here to create Christians but to create Christs. My effort is to create Buddhas not Buddhists.

You cannot relate with the trees through logic but there are ways to relate with trees. If you become open, if you feel the being of the tree, if you feel the texture

of the tree, if you hug the tree, close your eyes and simply feel its being, you will be contacting it on a totally different plane. Then even rocks start speaking to you. Then the whole Existence is alive, suddenly alive. Everything comes alive; it is no longer dead. That life is cosmic consciousness. In the East we call it Buddhahood. In Christianity you call it Christ consciousness. Hindus call it Krishna consciousness.

Krishna, Christ and Buddha are synonymous. They are not confined to persons; please understand, they are states of being.

It is of no use to follow anybody. The real thing is to love Christ, to love Buddha, to love Krishna; not as followers, but as fellow travelers because it is the same pilgrimage, the same journey you are on. You will be passing through the same places that Jesus passed through before he became Christ. You are then in bliss.

One has to experience bliss. One has to prepare oneself for the great experience. Meditation simply prepares the ground and it helps you to open your eyes. It is healing. Once your eyes are healed you know what it is.

Many times people asked Buddha, 'What is bliss?' and he would always say, 'Just be with me and be silent for a few months, a few years, and whenever you are right, ripe, mature enough to know it, I will tell you.' Many stayed with him and he would never tell them what it was.

One day he would ask them, 'Now do you want to know what bliss is?' And they would say, 'It can't be said, but we ourselves know. We are grateful that you tricked us into bliss. You never said anything about it but you helped us to be silent, to be still.'

When you are silent and still, something wells up within you. That is bliss. It is your innermost nature. But remember, it is an experience; it is not a theory, it is not a dogma, it is not contained in any scriptures. But it is written all over Existence, on each leaf of a tree, on each pebble on the seashore; you will only be able to see it when you have experienced it in the innermost shrine of your being. Then you will see it everywhere. Then the whole Existence is made of bliss and nothing else.

Let bliss be a song that resounds in you. Let it be eternal. Let it be *nityānanda*.



A Thousand Blazing Suns

11.9 Sanjaya said:

O king, having spoken thus, the great Lord of Yoga, Krishna, showed to Arjuna His supreme cosmic form.

11.10 Numerous mouths and eyes, with numerous wonderful sights, numerous divine ornaments, with numerous divine weapons uplifted,

11.11 Arjuna saw this universal form wearing divine garlands and clothing, anointed with celestial fragrances, wonderful, resplendent, endless, with faces on all sides.

11.12 If the splendor of a thousand suns were to blaze all together in the sky, it would be like the splendor of that mighty being.

11.13 There, in the body of the God of gods, the Pandava then saw the whole universe resting in One, with all its infinite parts.

11.14 Dhananjaya, filled with wonder, his hair standing on end, then bowed his head to the God and spoke with joined palms.

These verses show the unlimited, never-ending, wonderful, all-pervading nature of the Lord.

Ramakrishna says that when he experienced the form, the cosmic consciousness, he could not pluck a single flower from a plant because he felt that all the plants were garlands offered to God.

Anyone who has had this experience is reborn. At one level this experience is one of boundarilessness. The body expands to fill everything. The entire universe is part of the body. There is no separation of the individual and the whole. The whole is part and the part is whole. At another level the whole universe exists

within you. You are everything that you see around you. The grass outside the hut, the dog in the distance, the tree beyond, every single entity, animate and inanimate, resonates within you, as a part of you.

When I tell my healers not to eat meat, it is not based on any theory that only animals have body, mind and spirit, and therefore it is a sin to kill and eat them. I say it because from my experience the energy of dead animals, meat, is not conducive to the energy of healing, that's all. There is no morality involved here. By such logic, are carnivorous animals sinners? Of course not!

There is life in everything around us, every single thing, be it a rock, be it earth, be it a tree or an insect or animal. We share the same energy with them, they with us. When one experiences cosmic consciousness, collective consciousness, one realizes that we are all interconnected. We are all one.

In that mood, plucking a flower hurts. A wild animal responds peacefully to your presence. There is no violence in cosmic consciousness. There is only acceptance and inclusion.

This is what Arjuna saw in the universal form, an unlimited number of mouths, eyes and wonderful visions. The form was decorated with many celestial ornaments and bore many divine upraised weapons. He wore celestial garlands and garments. Many divine scents were smeared all over His body. All was wondrous, brilliant, unlimited, all-expanding.

Here he sees an unlimited number of mouths and eyes in Krishna. Now Arjuna sees 360 degrees in both horizontal and vertical dimensions. He sees the whole universe, all the people on the battlefield; all of them inside Krishna, as the universal consciousness. He sees the Whole as his own being.

There is no boundary to Krishna's universal form. The word Vishnu, which is his real form, means one who expands infinitely. The splendor that Sanjaya talks about is beyond anything the mind can comprehend, because it is the source of all splendor.

Notice, it is Sanjaya speaking these words, not Arjuna. Sanjaya is far from the battlefield and has been given the power to see what happens on the battlefield so that he can describe the events to his king Dhritarashtra. Now Sanjaya has the unbelievable fortune of witnessing the divine form of Krishna. Though Krishna says that this form is being shown only to Arjuna, by default Sanjaya has the great fortune to witness and participate in this vision.

Arjuna is awestruck and is in silence. He is yet to speak. What he has witnessed is beyond anything that he could have imagined or asked for. But the silence is a very active silence. It is a silence in which he experiences the truth of Krishna. It is a silence in which he is actively participating in the process and is being immersed.

Those who wish to understand this logically, through their mind, are unfortunate. They just cannot. Even as the expression of an experience, this is beyond logic and rationale. In Tamil there is a proverb concerning such experiences. It says those who experience do not talk. Those who talk have not experienced.

In the vast majority of cases it is true; but this is one of the exceptions. What is experienced is being expressed for the benefit of humanity. It is being expressed to give hope to the rest of humanity that it too can experience what Arjuna experienced with the grace of God.

Such an experience need not be confined to one religion or another. Arjuna perceives Krishna's divine form up to this point in time in a way that is familiar to him. Krishna is taking him in steps to provide him some comfort. A person of another religion may experience the divine form of the formless energy in a different manner. The ultimate energy behind and beyond both will be the same.

Sanjaya then summarizes Arjuna's reaction to the divine form of Krishna in the last few verses. Arjuna is still silent and it is Sanjaya who describes what happens.

What Arjuna saw was beyond his understanding. Wherever he looked was Krishna; Krishna in many forms, many shapes, many non-forms and non-shapes. There are no words to describe what Arjuna saw. How does one describe what is beyond the mind, beyond logic, beyond words, beyond all comprehension?

In the body of the supreme Lord, Arjuna saw the whole universe divided in different ways and at the same time united in one form. The universe is divided into many parts such as the sun, moon, earth, planets and other bodies in space. Here he sees all of them as one form. You need to understand this description, which is so beautiful. Later we shall enter into a meditation and pray to the *Parabrahma* Krishna to give us all a glimpse of what Arjuna received.

Arjuna is able to see the whole and at the same time all the parts. Even the word hologram that we now so commonly use to describe the totality of something preserved in a fragment does no justice to Arjuna's vision. In a hologram, one needs to make the effort to see the whole in the fragment. In this divine vision

granted to Arjuna, the whole existed with the part, with no separation, no discontinuity. The whole was part and the part was whole.

Of all the people on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, only Arjuna had this great fortune to behold the cosmic Vision of Krishna. Only he was granted the boon of divine vision to see the entire universe within Krishna. The vision that Arjuna beheld enveloped him completely. He was, in fact, part of that Vision. He was the observer and yet part of what was being observed. In addition, he was the experience of that observation as well.

Arjuna and Krishna grew up together from childhood. Krishna's sister Subhadra was Arjuna's wife. They had a deep relationship as friends. In this one moment, that relationship was redefined.

Q: Swamiji, You say that Arjuna's relationship with Krishna was redefined. Earlier you had explained that Arjuna's relationship with Krishna was one of friendship. What happens now?

Five kinds of relationships are talked about between master or God and disciple. These relationships called *bhāvas*, establish the role-play in the psychodrama of the master and disciple.

These are *vātsalya bhāva*, *matṛ bhāva*, *dāsa bhāva*, *sakha bhāva* and *madhura bhāva*.

The love of the mother for the child, as between Yashoda and Krishna is *vātsalya bhāva*. The mother need not be the biological mother, as indeed Yashoda is not. It is a relationship of total unconditional responsibility for another being.

The relationship of a child to the mother is *matṛ bhāva*, the kind of relationship Ramakrishna displayed to Mother Kali. Before he offered her food, Ramakrishna used to check if the idol of Kali was breathing with a thread held under her nose. This is a relationship of total trust.

The absolute devotion that Hanuman had for Rama exemplifies *dāsa bhāva*, the master-servant relationship. This is the most basic and stable of all such relationships, and one of unwavering acceptance and surrender.

Arjuna's relationship to Krishna was traditionally one of friendship, *sakha bhāva*. It was one of camaraderie, acceptance of one another and a feeling of equality.

Finally, *madhura bhāva* is the relationship of the beloved, of Meera to Krishna, the *gopīs* to Krishna, one of absolute abandon with a total lack of self-consciousness.

In most cases, the relationships are not absolute in time and space. They become mixed. In this particular instant, when Arjuna beheld the cosmic form of Krishna, all thoughts of friendship disappeared. He became the typical *dāsa*, servant.

Hands trembling, hair on end, tears in his eyes, unable to comprehend what he was witnessing, Arjuna bowed down deep in front of his erstwhile friend and started speaking in deep ecstasy.

Arjuna was not afraid of Krishna. What he now felt towards Krishna did not arise from his mind. It was involuntary. It was intuitive. You cannot make your hair stand on end even if you try the whole night and day. Ecstasy cannot be willed. Arjuna is in adoration. He is in awe. He realizes that he is in the presence of an energy that has no equal. Nothing he has ever experienced before comes close to this. His being opens while his mind rests.

In fact, Arjuna at this moment is beyond the five defined *bhāvas*. He is in the state of *mahā bhāva* - the state beyond the five *bhāvas*.



Worlds Tremble With Fear

11.15 Arjuna said;

O God, I see all the gods in Your body and many types of beings too.

Brahma, the Lord of creation, seated on the lotus, all the sages and celestial serpents.

11.16 I see Your infinite form on every side, with many arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes;

Neither the end, nor the middle nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the universe, O cosmic form.

11.17 I see You with crown, club and discus; a mass of radiance shining everywhere,

Difficult to look at, blazing all round like the burning fire and Sun in infinite brilliance.

11.18 You are the imperishable; the supreme being worthy to be known. You are the great treasure house of this universe.

You are the imperishable Protector of the eternal order. I believe You are the eternal being.

11.19 I see You without a beginning, middle or end, infinite in power and with many arms,

The sun and the moon being Your eyes, the blazing fire your mouth, the whole universe scorched by Your radiance.

11.20 This space between earth and the heavens and everything is filled by You alone.

O Great being, having seen Your wonderful and terrible form, the three worlds tremble with fear.

11.21 Many celestials enter into You; some praise You in fear with folded hands;

Many great masters and sages hail and adore You.

11.22 The Rudra, Aditya, Vasu, Sadhya, Vishvadeva, Ashvin, Marut, Ushmapa and a host of Gandharva, Yaksha, Asura and Siddha are all looking at You in amazement.

11.23 Having seen Your immeasurable form with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and frightening tusks,

O Mighty-armed, the worlds are terrified and so am I.

11.24 Seeing You, Your form touching the sky, flaming in many colors, mouths wide open, large fiery eyes, O Vishnu,

I find neither courage nor peace; I am frightened.

As Arjuna is in the same consciousness as the Lord, this verse should actually start with ‘*Bhagavān uvāca*’ meaning ‘the Lord said!’ These statements are said to come from Him for us to record.

These are such beautiful ways that he describes the form. You may wonder why he does so. Please understand, he does so to inspire us to work to achieve this form and this experience, to move in this path. Arjuna is showing us the way.

He says, ‘O Lord! I can see all the gods and deities in Your body. I can see the special union of living entities. I can see Brahma seated on the lotus flower. I can see all the sages and divine serpents. O Lord of the universe, I see many arms, stomachs, faces, eyes and your limitless form. O universal form, I cannot see your beginning, middle or end.’

As a matter of fact, when you begin to see 360 degrees in both horizontal and vertical dimensions, there really is no beginning, middle or end to see. It is a continuum. It is like seeing one of these special movies on a circular screen. Where would you describe the beginning to be, the end to be or the middle to be? It is an infinite circle. The Divine is an infinite circle, with no beginning, no end and

therefore no middle. Without a beginning and an end, to talk about the middle makes no sense.

The form is difficult to see in its sheer glowing radiance, spreading on all sides like blazing fire or the immeasurable brightness of the sun. Yet Arjuna sees this glowing form everywhere adorned with various crowns and discs. He sees Krishna wearing the diadem, holding the mace and discus.

Arjuna says, 'Your magnificence is shining everywhere, from all sides, difficult to see. You are blazing from all sides with the luster of the sun, limitless.'

Part of what Arjuna sees here is the traditional representation of Lord Vishnu. Vishnu is always depicted with His weapons of mace and discus, the *gada* and *cakra*, and wearing the jewel-studded crown. Vishnu is also depicted resting on the ocean of milk upon the giant serpent Adishesha, with Brahma rising from Vishnu's navel upon a lotus flower.

Some of what he sees is formless energy. He perceives radiance more powerful than a thousand suns, blazing and dazzling, impossible to look at even with his newly endowed divine eye. What Arjuna sees is beyond any sensory perception, something that could be experienced in that moment in time, impossible to express.

Suddenly the scene changes in these verses.

Arjuna is terrified. What he is seeing now is quite different from what he expected when he asked to see Krishna's divine form.

Arjuna is now incoherent. What he keeps saying is neither logical nor well thought out. What he sees he reproduces to the best of his mental abilities.

Arjuna is convinced, seeing the universal form of Krishna, that what he sees is the supreme being, the *puruṣa*, the imperishable, the very origin of all, the Eternal.

He says, 'You are without origin, middle or end with unlimited power. You spread throughout the heavens and through all other directions. O supreme soul, *Paramātmān*, after having seen your wonderful form, all the worlds and the whole universe is trembling with fear. All the celestial beings are shuddering before this form and entering into this formless form, some of them afraid, offering prayers with folded hands, along with hosts of realized sages praising this form in silent acceptance and wonderment.'

There is no other record so clear about the cosmic frequency of the universal form as in the Gita. What Arjuna perceives is what is always present, but which he

normally has no capability to see. Now he sees Krishna in all His manifestations, from the highest to the lowest frequency levels of energy with nothing filtered.

But suddenly the form seems to change from the magnificent, comforting and expanded form, to one that is now disturbing. It is still not clear to Arjuna what is happening, but he can anticipate that something he is about to see is not going to be as pleasant as what he had seen so far.

What Arjuna sees disturbs him.

‘O All pervading Vishnu! I see You with your many radiating colors, burning fire in your gaping mouth, heating up the entire universe with radiance, touching the sky, and Your form unnerves me. My heart trembles in fear and I have no courage or peace to behold You.’

Until now Arjuna was saying there was no beginning, middle or end. Now he says the form is touching the sky; an indication that he is settling, coming down from the experience. ‘Seeing your gaping mouth, your great glowing eyes, overcome by fear, I can no longer maintain my mental steadiness or equilibrium.’

Please understand, as long as you want to maintain the equilibrium of your mind, you will be in this mad world. There is no such thing as equilibrium. What we think of as equilibrium is not so.

Arjuna says he wants equilibrium, meaning that he wants his mind to be under his intellectual control. He wants to know the cause and effect and feel that they are in his control. As long as these are under your control, you feel as if you are a leader; your ego is strong. But the moment these are taken away from you, you feel at a loss and no more a leader. You are just a drop in the ocean. He is afraid of that and is not able to stay in that same state.

The wave in the ocean is part of the ocean. As long as it feels itself to be part of the ocean, there is no separation. However, when the wave experiences its own identity, creates its own identity, it no longer feels itself a part of the ocean. It feels itself to be a separate entity. When it is time to merge back into that ocean, it is afraid. When it looks back at the ocean with a feeling of separation, it feels afraid.

When Arjuna had his first glimpse of the cosmic Vision of Krishna, he identified with the Vision. There was no separation. Now, suddenly there is separation. Along with separation there is fear.

Q: Swamiji, you said bliss is God, and we do not experience God. So God only remains a concept. But you have said we can experience bliss, which means that we can experience God. How then do we work towards achieving bliss?

Bliss is not an achievement. It is not an end product. It is not a goal. It is not something that is going to happen in the future. One cannot desire it, one cannot be ambitious for it; it is already in us, it is our very being.

We just have to look in, we just have to turn in and it is discovered. It is a discovery, not an achievement.

This is the whole foundation of meditation. Meditation means that all that is worth achieving need not be achieved because it is already inside you, and all that can be achieved is not worth achieving. Money can be achieved, prestige can be achieved, but they are not worth achieving because all will be left behind; death will come and snatch you away.

So that which can be achieved is not worth achieving, and that which is worth achieving need not be achieved at all because it is already there. You are made of it. Love, bliss, God: these are our intrinsic ingredients. They are given. Nothing is to be done about them.

You have it already, but you have forgotten about it. You have not used it for so many lives; unless you start using it, you will not become aware of it. The function of the master is to help you rediscover what you seem to have lost.

The only difference between an ordinary man and a Buddha or a Krishna is their level of awareness. Both are blissful; one knows, one does not. When you know, gratitude arises; a deep gratitude arises. When you don't know, you go on complaining. You go on unnecessarily carrying a grudge, as if life is a burden.

Just as breathing, blood circulation, food and nourishment are necessary for the existence of the body, so bliss is necessary for the existence of the soul. But a little digging inside is needed so that we can uncover the undercurrent.

Once you have known your blissfulness, the source of it, your whole vision changes, your whole perspective becomes new. Then you look at Existence with new eyes. Then whatsoever you have found inside yourself, you will find everywhere because whatsoever we are, we find in Existence.

Existence is simply a mirror: Existence only echoes our beings. Once you know that bliss is your nature, the whole nature of the universe becomes blissful. That is what is meant by realization, liberation.

A small story:

Once there was a boy who was always complaining about his poverty. One day he said to his father, 'I am very unfortunate to be so poor. I can't even study or pray.'

His father replied, 'My dear, the finest prayer and the finest study is in accepting and welcoming life as it is.'

Happiness is a choice. If you know that it is a question of choice, you will choose happiness always. People think that they are victims. This is wrong. We are not victims. It is not that situations go on dragging us into unhappiness and sometimes into happiness and that we are just at the mercy of blind forces. No, not at all; a thousand times *no*! Every moment we are choosing.

Maybe our choice is unconscious, we may not be consciously choosing, but the choice is there. From this moment, start becoming aware of it and you will be surprised. Sometimes in the middle of your sadness suddenly the clouds will disperse and it will be sunny, because suddenly you see the point— that you have chosen to be sad and there is no need to be sad!

The moment you decide to be blissful, misery starts escaping from you, but the decision has to be total. It is worth getting involved in being blissful. There can't be anything more valuable.

So drop all sadness, all seriousness. And don't ask how to drop them. It is a strategy of the mind to go on keeping them; it is a way of postponement. 'How?' is just a way to postpone dropping misery. Simply drop misery. Don't linger, don't postpone. Say goodbye and don't look back. And you will be surprised that it is so simple.

It is so natural to be blissful. It is unnatural to be miserable. It is really a very difficult job to be miserable, but people are so skilful, so intelligent at being miserable. They have become great artists of misery. If there is nothing to be miserable about, they will invent something.

A psychiatrist advised his patient to go to the mountains for three or four weeks for a rest. The third day he received a telegram from the patient: 'I am feeling wonderful. Why?'

People cannot accept bliss easily. Misery is okay.

Remember that it is only a question of your decision. One can be free in a single quantum leap. Renunciation is not about practising bliss. It is simply about renouncing misery. Bliss takes courage.

It is said that when Bodhidharma, Buddha's disciple, became enlightened, he roared like a lion. The people of the nearby village became so afraid because they thought that a lion had come. They were thinking of escaping to some other place when somebody told them, 'Don't worry, it is only that old monk; something has happened to him. He is roaring!' Then they all slowly went into the forest, gathered around him and asked, 'What happened? Have you gone crazy or something?'

He said, 'I was crazy before. I used to think that I was just a sheep but now I know I am a lion!'

Buddha himself has said that when one becomes enlightened, one roars like a lion. One becomes a rebel, and to rebel against misery is the greatest rebellion.

A meditator's eye is needed to see bliss. These two eyes that you have won't help much. A third eye is needed. These two eyes go outwards. They don't know how to look in. They are not meant for that.

The meditator starts growing a third eye. Just between these two eyes, exactly in the middle, there is a subtle center which starts functioning as an eye: it starts looking in. To look outside, two sides are needed because the outside consists of duality. To look in only one eye is needed because the inside consists of the non-dual.

From the very beginning, your meditation has to be on the third eye. With closed eyes look in and try to remember that exactly between both eyes, the spot I just touched, there is a hidden center. It is the sixth energy center in you, your *ājñā cakra*.

Once it starts functioning and moving, you become capable of seeing within. Sitting silently, look at the third eye center. As you pour your energy towards it, it will start moving. In the beginning you may feel a little strange because something new is happening, which has never happened in your body before. But soon it settles, and once it settles great calmness descends.

It is possible for you. Just a little effort and the wheel will start moving, just a little effort and the benefit will be great. The benefit is going to be so much that the little effort is nothing compared to it. So let that be your concentration point: with closed eyes look at the third eye. Looking at it you start feeling great light spreading inside you, and with the light comes delight!

You reach eternal bliss, *nityānanda*!



Tell Me Who You Are

11.25 Having seen your fearsome mouths with blazing tusks like the fire of the end of the universe,

I know not the four directions nor do I find peace. O Lord of the Deva, O Refuge of the universe, be gracious.

11.26 All the sons of Dhritarashtra with many kings of the earth, Bhishma, Drona, the son of the charioteer, Karna, with our warrior chieftains

11.27 Into Your mouths with terrible tusks, fearful to behold, they enter.

Some are seen caught in the gaps between the tusks and their heads crushed.

11.28 Even as many torrents of rivers flow towards the ocean,

so too these warriors in the world of men enter Your flaming mouths.

11.29 Just as moths hurriedly rush into the fire for their own destruction,

So too these creatures rush hastily into Your mouths of destruction.

11.30 Swallowing all worlds on every side with Your flaming mouths, You lick in enjoyment.

O Vishnu, Your fierce rays are burning, filling the whole world with radiance.

11.31 Tell me who You are, so fierce in form; salutations to You, O supreme; have mercy.

Indeed I know not Your purpose, but I desire to know You, the Original being.

In these verses Arjuna expresses his discomfort.

Arjuna says earlier:

‘I see O Lord! All the manifestations of Shiva, Aditya, Vasu and Vishvadeva, Ashvin, Marut, Gandharva, the forefathers, Yaksha, Asura and all the celestial beings and demi-gods, all rolled in You in wonder, all part of Your cosmic consciousness. Whatever You are is divine energy. O Mighty Armed One, all the planets with all the demi-gods are disturbed, shaken by Your form with many faces, eyes, arms, legs, thighs and bellies and Your many terrible teeth. As they are disturbed, so am I.’

Now he slowly comes down. From this verse we should say, ‘Arjuna *uvāca*!’ meaning Arjuna says... It is no longer the divine state that Arjuna talks from. The moment he started feeling fear, he descended to his normal state. You should understand that it is only your fear that separates you from cosmic consciousness.

When Arjuna says, ‘So am I’, that he is frightened, he becomes Arjuna, the man.

There are two things that make you a human – the instinct to possess and the instinct to survive. The instinct to survive arises out of fear, from the *svādiṣṭhāna cakra* (fear energy center in your body), and the instinct to possess comes out of greed, from the *mūlādhāra cakra* (sex energy center in your body). This sums it up. Here the instinct to survive has appeared and he has become Arjuna, the man. We do not understand that when we drop the instinct to survive, we become Krishna; we exist forever. We become *Bhagavān*, the universal consciousness. But most often, we hold onto the instinct to survive. Now Arjuna slowly comes down and becomes Arjuna, the man.

Arjuna exclaims, ‘I see all the sons of Dhritarashtra along with their allied kings, Bhishma, Drona, Karna and other chief soldiers rushing into Your fearful mouths. I see some trapped with their heads smashed between Your teeth, ground into nothing.’

He describes the whole scene. He sees the heavy losses on both sides; his own side, his warriors and generals, but even heavier losses on the other side, including Bhishma who is invincible, Drona and Karna who are unconquerable. By inference he sees his own victory in the end.

In the beginning Arjuna sees what he wished to see. He sees what he believes to be the cosmic form of the great Vishnu in His traditional attire and weapons, surrounded by Gods and sages. The form changed suddenly into a terrifying one of death, all-consuming and terror-inspiring, to which the entire universe bowed down in fear.

From this macro perspective, Arjuna comes down to see the same destruction being played out at the level of the battlefield at *Kurukṣetra*. His enemies, the great warriors arrayed against him in battle, fly into the gaping mouth of destruction like moths into fire. Arjuna sees with convincing reality the destruction of all the great warriors who would have been expected to give him trouble.

However, this scene does not fill him with peace and comfort. Arjuna is terrified at this vision of destruction. The destruction of those whom he perceives as his mortal enemies leaves him with no comfort.

The truth is that Arjuna is not in control. He has no clue about what is happening to him and around him. He is in the presence of a primal force before which all that is obvious is his own insignificance. Victory and defeat seem to make no difference. The vision of destruction implies that he too is mortal. Arjuna is terrified.

‘Who are You?’, asks Arjuna plaintively. ‘What are You here for? What are You doing? You are so fierce. You are not the form I asked for. There seems to be some mistake!’

‘I see men disappearing into You as rivers rush into the mighty oceans. Like moths rushing into fire I see creatures speed into destruction within You.’

‘You are not the compassionate Lord whose glories I heard from You. You are not who I thought You were. I needed You to comfort me. Instead, You terrify me.’

‘Have mercy upon me.’

Death is the ultimate fear. Even the great warrior Arjuna trembles when faced with death. It is not that Arjuna is not aware of the inevitability of death or the nature of death. For a long time now Krishna has been educating Arjuna on the perishability of the body-mind and the imperishability of the spirit. Arjuna has fully understood. Yet, Arjuna is petrified.

What is Arjuna so afraid of?

One thing, Arjuna does not expect the cosmic form of Krishna to be anything but loving and compassionate. He has already framed Krishna with his own template, the picture that he wants Him to be. Krishna can be the friend, the master, the beloved, the child, the mother and all combined. In every one of these moods, in each *bhāva*, Krishna is still lovable, still reachable.

However, in the form that Krishna has presented now, the all-devouring monster as it were, Arjuna is unable to comprehend any aspect of Krishna that he has known. This is a terrifying apparition, one that is horrifyingly real.

What he does not expect, what his mind cannot comprehend, what does not fall in line with his *samskāra* of beliefs and values, evokes great fear.

For the first time, Arjuna realizes that the master cannot be predicted! He now knows that the master cannot be put in a frame. The primal energy that the master is has to be experienced in whatever manner it is presented, without expectations and fears.

Nature and Existence are neither cruel nor kind. The very term ‘compassion’ has a different meaning in the cosmic dictionary. It is not the sympathy offered by each of us to another with or without any real feeling. It is not kindness. It is not the desire to be doing ‘good,’ whatever that looks like to us. True compassion is the result of experiencing that we are one with all of Existence. There is no ‘other’.

There is neither the feeling of wishing to do good or bad. In the deepest spiritual sense, nothing is good or bad. Everything just is. That is why death is the great leveler. Death does not differentiate. That is why the Hindu god of death, Yama, is also the god of justice. He is impartial. No one expects Yama to be kind or to play favorites. Because he is impartial, he evokes fear. Because he cannot be influenced, he terrifies.

That is why, when people start questioning the purpose of Nature when thousands and millions die in natural calamities, there can be no answer. Such is Nature. Nature is not kind, which is *our* dictionary meaning, our interpretation of compassion. Nature is inscrutable and unpredictable and impartial in the cosmic sense of compassion.

Why should a ten-year-old child die while the ninety-year-old grandfather lives on? Why not? What do we know about the cosmic cycle of life and death other than the limited attachments we form and the emotions we feel?

Sometime ago I was asked to heal an autistic child in the USA. When I laid my hands on the child, the child spoke to me in crude Tamil telling me to take my hands off. The parents knew no Tamil. I asked the child why he did not wish to be cured. He said that the reason he was born autistic is because he did not wish to take any responsibility in this life.

I asked whether this was fair to his loving parents, who suffered as a result. The being said, 'That is why I chose them, because they are so caring and would not discard me. Now leave me in peace.'

Many choose chronic and incurable diseases in this life to reach a master. Many of the people who are with me now first came to me for healing, after all else had failed. For many births, their spirits have sought to meet a master in their quest for realization, and finally the spirit decides that the way to succeed is to be attached to a near-fatal disease.

What we see is often not as it appears. The life that we lead is another drama. Only when the projection lamp is switched off do we see the screen. Until then we laugh and cry with the actors on the screen, not aware that it is all a play. When the lamp of life is switched off, we reach another plane where we see the game that we played for what it was. Until then, we too laugh, cry, shout and fight.

It is so easy to fall in love with a handsome master. Krishna is the most beautiful of all the gods. He is so easy to fall in love with! To fall in love with a terrifying Kali or an impassive Shiva is far more difficult. When you do, you expect the form to be different too. You need to be a Ramakrishna to accept and love Mother Kali who dances on dead bodies. You need to be a Shankara to fall in tune with Shiva who is forever in silent contemplation.

But anyone can love Krishna, and everyone does. No one expects Krishna to be terrifying. So when Krishna presents another form to Arjuna, the ground literally slips from under Arjuna's feet. He has no support. He does not know where to turn for help.

So Arjuna pleads, 'Please have mercy upon me. Tell me who You are. Tell me why You are here. I would like to know. I bow down to You.'

Q: Swamiji, How can this happen? When we talk about an *iṣṭadevatā*, a favorite deity, it is someone we can relate to. How can we relate to a terrifying form?

Yes, you are right. The reason you pray to a form instead of the formless is because you can identify with the form. You can identify with the form only when you are comfortable with it. You can fall in love with a favorite deity only when the favorite deity is lovable.

Please understand, however, that this is a beginner's state. It is only in the beginning that you need this comfort, this attraction towards the form, to fall in tune. As your awareness grows the form has to be dropped. That is why time and again I remind my disciples to drop all forms, including my own, in their meditations.

Arjuna is beyond the beginner's stage. He is an evolved spirit, who seeks to see the master in His true form. The master therefore shows him His true form.

Poets describe Nature as beautiful, wondrous, miraculous, captivating and blissful. Yes, nature is all that. But, Nature is also earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, cyclones and other such terrifying phenomena in which thousands of lives are lost. How many poets write about all that? Even if they did, how many people would want to read about all that?

You would say, 'We have enough of all these tragedies, why should we focus more on them?' For most of you, there is a clear distinction between what is pleasant and what is discomforting. You wish to see what you find pleasant. You wish to change what is not pleasant into what is pleasant. Unfortunately, Nature does not agree with this. Nature is what it is, take it or leave it.

Krishna is Nature, He is Existence, and He is the universe. He is not one-dimensional. He is multi-dimensional. Arjuna asked for the truth. Krishna showed him the truth.

If you are uncomfortable with the truth, you can stay at the level where it is make-believe, and be comfortable. I tell people who come to me:

'You have a choice. You can be gazers who are happy to look at My form and be happy. To those people, I shall give eye candy and brain candy. You can then go away happy. You can keep My picture, do whatever you want to that picture, feel happy. There is nothing wrong with that. But, don't think you are looking at truth.

'If you wish to know the truth, come closer and be open. You should then be prepared to undergo surgery. I will become the surgeon, and there will be no more candies. Depending on what is needed to dissolve your ego, I may burn you; I may make you do things that normally you would avoid as being unpleasant.

'This is your choice. There is no compulsion, no force. To me it makes no difference what you choose. What makes you happy is what I respond to. However, once you choose to come close, do not run away when things get hot. It is like running away from the operating table. It is dangerous.'

Arjuna received what he asked for. Arjuna was not asking for the beautiful form of his favorite deity. He wanted to know the real form of Krishna, the *Parabrahma* Krishna. Of course, he did not know what to expect. That form is rarely revealed. When he perceived one part of that form, it was so terrifying that Arjuna, the greatest of all warriors, could not bear to look at it. It was so totally different from all that he had expected to see.

Existence is full of opposites. In the material world of Existence one cannot see any one attribute without experiencing its opposite. There is no good without evil. There is no love without hate. There is no courage without fear. There is no faith without doubt. It is only when you see both sides, both opposing attributes, and become comfortable with the truth of these opposing attributes, that you can go beyond both, transcend both and treat both the same way.

In the spiritual world, I have often said, there is no right or wrong. There just IS. What happens is what happens. There is no sinner and there is no saint. Put in another way, sinners and saints are the same. There can be no Krishna without a Kamsa or Shishupala. There can be no Rama without Ravana.

A piece of Hindu mythology here:

Jaya and Vijaya were the gatekeepers of Lord Vishnu in Vaikuntha, Vishnu's abode. Once they barred a sage from entering and disturbing Vishnu. The angry sage cursed them to be born as humans. When they pleaded to Vishnu to remove the curse, He said He could only modify it. Vishnu offered them a choice: to be born as His enemies for a few births and then return to Vaikuntha, or to be born as His devotees for many births before they could return.

Jaya and Vijaya chose the first option. It is said that they were born as enemies of Vishnu's incarnations upon earth, as Shishupala and Kamsa, as Hiranyaksha and Hiranyakashipu, as Ravana and Kumbhakarna etc. They wanted to be back with Vishnu as soon as possible, and they knew it made no difference whether they were perceived as enemies or as devotees. In fact, as the enemy, Vishnu remained in their hearts far more intensely than in the case of any devotee.

This understanding can only happen when you see both the seemingly opposing attributes and become aware that they are in essence the same. You need to understand that it is your perception that makes them seem different and opposing. What is good for one person may be bad for another. What one

person loves, another may hate. When you go beyond the subjective element of perception and witness the event or object without attachment, the differentiation disappears.

Arjuna is on his way to this understanding. If you immerse yourself in this chapter's inner meaning, you too will understand that to be able to see the formless you first need to see the form and then go beyond that form. In that process the form may not be the form that you are used to, or even the form that you wish to see.

Q: In what way are your teachings different from other great masters? You have said not to renounce what we already have. Many interpret the scriptures to mean that we must give up all our worldly possessions. I am confused.

It is good to be confused. Only an enlightened person and an idiot are never confused! So this is your natural state!

What I say and what the scriptures say are the same. What the scriptures say and what Krishna repeats again and again in the Bhagavad Gita, is to renounce the desire for the outcome of actions. Never once does He say, 'Renounce all actions; go and sit in the forests or the mountains and keep your eyes closed.'

Again and again He tells you to do what is right: do your *dharma*, do whatever are your prescribed duties based on your *prārabdha karma*.

I say the same thing to you but in words that may make more sense in today's greed-filled atmosphere. There is a huge difference between Krishna's age and today. People still respected scriptural injunctions then. They believed in spiritual progress for personal transformation, and not because of greed and fear.

Now we are filled with cerebral pollution from the media and from all around us. Everyone is an expert on everything. We are not ready to give up anything, yet would like to have everything. Krishna's sayings will have very few takers today, unless they get the basic understanding.

I tell you that you need not renounce anything at all. That is true. Please do not even think of giving up anything that you have. Enjoy what you have. Enjoy your wealth, your car, your home, your sound system, your holidays, your work and everything that materially fills your life. Enjoy your relationships; your wife,

children, family and friends. Enjoy all this. But give up your fantasies. Stop wanting what your neighbor has, or your friend owns, or something that someone you see around you enjoys. These are not your possessions. These are your fantasies.

These fantasies prevent you from enjoying what you now have. So, I say to you, do not renounce anything that you now have, but give up, renounce all the fantasies about what you don't have! What causes you suffering is your desire for what you do not have. They are your fantasies about what you think you want to have. Drop these and you will be fine, you will be happy.

Scriptures, especially Hindu scriptures, are the outcome of the experience of enlightened masters. They are never wrong. But it is not easy to understand them because you live in another time, another space. You need a dictionary. I am your dictionary!



Do Not Be Afraid

11.32 Sri Bhagavan said:

I am the mighty world-destroying time, I am now destroying the worlds.

Even without you, none of the warriors standing in the hostile armies shall live.

11.33 Get up and gain glory. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the prosperous kingdom.

I have slain all these warriors; you are a mere instrument, Arjuna.

11.34 Drona, Bheeshma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors have already been slain by Me; destroy them.

Do not be afraid; fight and you shall conquer your enemies in battle.

Krishna explains in these verses what He really is.

‘I am time,’ says Krishna. ‘I devour and destroy the world.’

This is one of the most potent truths uttered by Krishna in Gita. He has earlier talked to Arjuna about *ātman*, about rebirth, about the nature of *karma*, about doing work without getting attached to the result of work and about His glories.

For the first time, He takes off His mask and says matter-of-factly, ‘I am the Destroyer.’ He pulls no punches in responding to Arjuna’s query, ‘Who are you, and what is your purpose?’

‘I am *kāla*, time,’ says the Lord, ‘and I destroy.’

Time never stands still. It moves on. Nothing can stop the flow of time. Nothing can bring back time. Nothing can move time forward. Time destroys.

The future constantly moves into the present, and then into the past. At the frequency of our life, we can only see the present, and remember what we can of the past. The sad part is that though we can only experience the present, we constantly try to escape the present. We are forever caught in the fantasies of a future we know nothing about and the regrets of a past we never really lived when it was our present.

Our entire story is one of missed time. We destroy time. We allow time to destroy us. We miss and kill the present, which is the only facet of time that is available to us. Instead of being where the present is and shaping our future, we fantasize and let the present as well as the future be destroyed.

The only certainty in our life is that when time moves on, it is forever lost. However much we may regret and repent, nothing will change what has happened. But we do have the power at the moment of the present to shape our future. Every human being has the freedom and free-will to choose his action at the present moment. He can let go by default and claim that whatever happened was predestined. Predestination is simply the choice that we did not exercise.

Only when we are aware in the present moment can we craft our future. Not when it is still the future and not when it slips into the past. The first is impossible and the latter is too late. By being grounded in the present, by being aware of the present, one can become aware of the future and one can shape one's future. We need to use all our intelligence, energy and creativity to live blissfully in this moment, not in thoughts about the future or regrets about the past.

Krishna is stating a simple fact here. 'With or without you,' He says, 'all these warriors will be dead. As Time, I shall devour them. It is not you who are the cause. You can be the superficial reason. By being the instrument of their destruction, be the gainer of fame, wealth and power.'

It is easy to interpret these words of Krishna to mean that the future is predestined, since He says all these enemies of Arjuna will be destroyed. From this we can even interpret that His role is to protect the good and destroy the evil.

As *Mahākāla*, time personified, Krishna destroys all, the good and the bad. Time does not differentiate. Time does not keep accounts of whether you did good deeds or bad. Time moves on and destroys the present into past, future into present and past.

As time, Krishna is neutral. He just is. He knows what will happen in the future and yet He does not influence it. As time, He lets happen what happens. He is the supreme energy that just flows.

When one is in tune with Krishna, when one surrenders to Him, to His Will, things happen as they should. There is no interference on our part. We do what we ought to, what we need to, without worrying about what ought to happen and how. We then are in the flow of time; we are in the flow of Krishna's energy.

When we resist and try to have things the way we wish them to be, rather than the way they would be, we get in the way. Like the rock that gets pounded by the river and eventually gets reduced to fine dust, we too get reduced to nothing by time. By imitating the reed in the river that bends offering no resistance, we can flow with time.

Struggling to choose is not freedom. It is the bondage of the mind. There is no need to make a choice. Choice happens at the level of the mind, not at the level of the being. When we relax into our being, we are in bliss, choiceless awareness. We can let the choice happen by itself. Choicelessness can be the choice.

When we are conscious of the present moment, when we are truly aware of what we do in that present moment, whatever we do becomes the choiceless option. We don't need to make any special effort. Whatever happens in the present moment's awareness is the right choice.

When Krishna speaks of destroying and wiping out the world, He is talking about the destruction of the illusory physical and material world. He is the destroyer of fantasies, He is the destroyer of identities, He is the destroyer of egos and he is the destroyer of all that is unreal.

As He has said earlier on, what gets destroyed is the shell, the perishable body-mind, not the imperishable *ātman*. What the *Mahākāla*, time, destroys, is the psychodrama that is being played out on the battlefield.

It is important to understand what Krishna means in these words. As the supreme consciousness, He too is the energy of Shiva, the Rejuvenator. Shiva is not the Destroyer as He is made out to be. He recreates by destroying. There can be no creation if there is no destruction. There can be no life without death. Shiva's aspect of *Kālabhairava* is the time that Krishna refers to. He is the controller of past, present and future and all that happens in these time zones.

When one surrenders to this supreme consciousness, one loses all fear of time. One falls in tune with time. One flows with time. Whatever one does is the right thing at the right time. When one loses fear of time, one also loses fear of death. All that dies is recreated.

Arjuna expressed his dilemma earlier as one of having to destroy his elders, his teachers and his relatives. Unknown to him, one of his opponents was his half-brother Karna. Just before the war, Kunti, mother of both Karna and Arjuna, tries to avoid bloodshed by letting Karna know that she is his mother, who gave him up as a newborn child. Karna tells her that it is inevitable that one of them, Karna or Arjuna, will die at the other's hands and that she will still have five sons.

Arjuna had elaborated on his fear of killing all those he loved and respected. He wondered whether he was causing the destruction of his entire lineage by doing this. In truth, Arjuna was fighting against the destruction of his own conditioning. His *saṁskāras*, past memories of parental, teacher related and other conditionings were difficult to destroy. This great war is really the fight between Arjuna and his *saṁskāras*.

Krishna once again takes responsibility for this destruction. Earlier there were only words. Now Arjuna had seen the destruction for himself. He had seen the Kaurava warriors being consumed by the destructive destination that Krishna had become. It was impossible for Arjuna to disbelieve what he had seen - Bhishma, Drona, Karna and others disappearing into the vast form of Krishna.

Now Krishna consoles Arjuna. 'You have seen the truth of what happens. They have been destroyed already. Do not lose heart. Do what you have to do. Fight and destroy what remains, which is just the illusion of your fears.'

Q: If time is absolute and time decides everything, then where is the question of free will and choice? Even if we accept choicelessness, how can we drop the fear of not knowing what will happen?

An excellent question. Let me start with the second part first.

The fear of the unknown is what disturbs everyone the most. At its core, the fear of death is the fear of the unknown and vice-versa. We do not know what is going to happen when we die. Some say we are reborn. Some say we will go to hell. Others say we can go to heaven if we donate cows or do charity work.

This fear of death, which is at the root of all our fears, is born from the fear of losing our identity. From childhood we have cultivated an identity that is unique to us. We feel that we are special; we are not the same as our neighbor, our friends.

We like to think we are a little better. We are islands. This is how we create our identity.

Death frightens us because we don't know what will happen to the identity that we have built around ourselves. We are no longer there to protect, nourish and expand our identity. We fear that death will cut off all our moorings, and we will be suspended in an unsupported vacuum.

If you talk to people who have had a 'near-death experience', you will find a common thread: They have all lost their fear of death. They have faced death and found it welcoming. In fact, they were all reluctant to come back.

The way to shed any fear, especially of death, is to face that fear. How to face the fear of death? In some of our courses, there is a session that takes you through an experience akin to dying. It helps you feel the separation of mind, body and spirit. Once experienced with awareness, this meditation allows you freedom from the fear of death.

Once you have overcome the fear of death, all other fears related to the unknown drop automatically. If you are not afraid of dying, what else is there to be afraid of? In case you find it difficult to believe this, talk to people who have had a near-death experience. There are websites that describe these experiences. You will find that all these people have been transformed in a similar manner. They are free from all fears. They have faced their worst fear and come away unscathed.

Death is related to time. It is the ultimate 'present.' Future and past both merge into the present at death. But you do not have to die to experience the present moment, which is what time is all about. The present moment is the destroyer of the past and the creator of the future. Time is not merely the destroyer. Time is also the creator and the sustainer. Time is Maheshwara, *Mahā Īṣvara*, the God of gods. Time is the integration of past, present and future; creation, sustenance and destruction.

It is time, as the present moment, that decides everything. What happens in the future is decided by what happens now. What we cannot do to influence our present will certainly not help us in forming our future.

When Krishna says that all the Kaurava are already dead, He is speaking the truth that everyone born as a mortal will die at one time or another. It is also true of Arjuna and the other Pandavas. Krishna's focus now is to get Arjuna to stand up and fight. If Krishna had not persuaded Arjuna and made him aware, the possibility existed that Arjuna might have walked away. With Krishna's inputs the result was different.

There is always the element of free will and choice in what we do. What we need to remember is that our choice of action will not necessarily result in what we expect. This is the point where most of us have problems. We confuse choice with the end result. There is no guarantee that our choice will result in what we wish, though there is a connection.

That is why time and again in Bhagavad Gita, Krishna exhorts Arjuna to drop expectations and attachments. He tells Arjuna to do what he has to do, but with no expectation and attachment to the fruits of what he does. This is the key to success, even in the material world, especially in the material world!

All of us in the corporate world and in the material world or running households need to remember this well. Most of us are so focused on what we expect, so obsessed with the end result, be it our quarterly performance or the end-of-the-day result, that we lose sight of what we need to do 'now.' What is important is the 'now,' not the future. If we take care of the 'now,' the future takes care of itself.

We are never in the present moment. We are always in the past, recalling what we should have done, how we should have acted so that what happened could have turned out differently. We are full of regrets and guilt. Drop these regrets and guilt and move on. Nothing we do now can in any way influence what happened already. Even if we think that by ruminating over the past we can decide better for the future, we are wrong. We will only be deepening the guilt unwantedly.

We can never achieve anything by speculating about the future. We can daydream as much as we want, but nothing at all can happen unless we do something about it 'now.' Yes, thoughts influence, but they have to influence our current actions first, before they influence our future. They can only influence our future if they influence our present.

When we truly stay in the present, we become aware of what we are doing and what is happening around us. Our mind is where our body is. Whatever we do in this present moment will be right for us. Whatever path we take will lead us to the right destination. The present-moment awareness is one of intuition that determines what is best for us, without the need for rational analysis. We are in tune with the universe and what happens is in our best interest.

This is the seeming dilemma of free will and surrender. When we are in the present moment we exercise our free will by surrendering to the Highest cosmic energy. That is a decision we make. It is not an accidental happening. It is a choice to let things happen as they do in the present moment, without being concerned about the past and the future.

Meditation is the key to being in the present moment. In fact when we are in the present moment, we are in meditation. There is no difference at all. From the conscious state of mind we are elevated to a superconscious state that makes us aware of what we need to do. There is absolute clarity.



You Are Everything And Everywhere

11.35 Sanjaya said:

Having heard this speech of Keshava, the crowned Arjuna with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself,

Again addressed Krishna, voice choking, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

11.36 Arjuna said:

O Hrishiksha, it is but right that the world delights and rejoices in Your praise.

Rakshasas fly in fear in all directions and all hosts of sages bow to You.

11.37 And why should they not bow to Thee, O Great Soul, greater than all else, the Creator of even Brahma the Creator? O Lord of Lords, O Infinite being, O Abode of the universe,

You are the imperishable, that which is beyond both the seen and the unseen.

11.38 You are the primal God, the ancient being, the supreme Refuge of the universe. You are the Knower and the One to be known.

You are the supreme Abode, O being of Infinite forms, by You alone is the universe pervaded.

11.39 You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon, Prajapati and the great-grandfather of all.

Salutations unto You a thousand times, and again salutations unto You!

11.40 Salutations to You, before and behind! Salutations to You on every side!

O All! Infinite in power and Infinite in prowess, You are everything and everywhere.

Arjuna now reaches the third stage of his perception of Krishna's cosmic form.

In the first stage, Arjuna's expectations of the glorious universal form of Krishna were fulfilled. He saw Krishna the way He expected: with His crown, discus and mace, with Brahma rising on a lotus flower from Vishn'u navel.

Even as he was getting used to the enormity of the vision that he beheld, Arjuna found this form replaced by a terrible, all-devouring form of Krishna that filled Arjuna with fear. Arjuna cries out: 'Who are you? Why are you here?'

Krishna explains who He is; that He is the all-devouring time.

Still overcome with fear, but recovering from the primal fear that had overcome him a few moments ago, Arjuna now surrenders himself to Krishna.

Arjuna is so overwhelmed by the fearsome sight of Krishna as *Mahākāla*, devouring everything around Him, and is so relieved to still be alive and coherent, that all Arjuna can do is to sing Krishna's praises. He no longer has any doubt in his mind about the universal consciousness of Krishna, who till a while ago was his friend and charioteer. Whatever names and descriptions he is aware of to address this supreme being, he uses now.

At this stage, Arjuna understands who Krishna is. He understands what Krishna's purpose is. Arjuna's devotion is at its peak. He salutes Krishna as the source of all beings, the creator of Brahma, who in turn created Prajapati from whom all beings originated. He salutes Krishna as the elements of Nature. Since Krishna extends everywhere and there is no place where He is not present, Arjuna salutes Him in all directions. Arjuna now truly appreciates the unfathomable magnitude of Krishna.

Q: There are those who say we are all sinners; we are born sinners; that we must redeem ourselves to reach God and there is only one God. What do you say to this?

You are no sinner! You never were, you never are and you never will be!

Everybody is potentially a Krishna, a Christ or a Buddha. Feel blessed that God has given you the seed of the Ultimate. All that is needed is to find the right soil and to be ready to die in the soil, to rupture and grow.

If at all you need to redeem yourself, it is through renunciation. It is not through regretting anything that you have done. It is to transform from what you were to what you are.

You entered this world in the image of God. You were born pure, free and natural. Your external conditioning imposed changes upon you. You can go back to what you were born as, at any time.

That is what Jesus meant by the word 'repent.' In ancient Aramaic, which Jesus spoke, the word 'repent' meant 'to go back to your roots,' to your original nature, your divine nature. That is not the redemption that priests of any religion will talk about. They will talk about money, about contributions to the collection box and going to confession.

To go back, you need to renounce. As I said earlier, you need not renounce anything that you already have. Just renounce your expectations, your attachments and your fantasies. Renounce what you do not have, that is enough.

Renunciation is the right soil, and to be with a master means to be ready to die in Him. The moment the seed dies, a tree is born. The tree cannot be born without the death of the seed. It is only through death that the new arrives. One who knows this secret of life goes on dying every day, every moment, because then death is the process of renewal, of rebirth, of renewing oneself.

Feel blessed that God is within you. One need not be a Christian or a Hindu or anything to be God. Why settle for being a Christian when you can be a Christ? Why settle for being a Buddhist when to be a Buddha is within your grasp?

My suggestion to people is this: never settle for any small thing. Only the Ultimate can make us contented and fulfilled. Be blissful because we are already saved, from the very beginning we are saved. All this talk about our being sinners is manipulative. It is to keep us in bondage. It is to keep us under the control of the priests and religious leaders. By nature, we are free, we are God, and so, we cannot be sinners.

There is really no way to go astray because all ways lead to God; they can't lead anywhere else. Even those who go astray are simply taking a longer route, that's all. Where else can they go? There is nowhere else to go to, God is everywhere. So you can go south or north or east or west, or you need not go anywhere. Sit wherever you are: God is there too!

Those who say they don't believe in God, they also belong to God. And as far as God is concerned they are also saved. This whole universe is already in the

ultimate state: we have just forgotten. We have forgotten that we need not do anything. We have forgotten that we are already there, where we would like to be. We have forgotten that we are already That which we want to be, That which we dream about and desire, and we have never been otherwise.

In Zen they have a saying: From the very beginning all are saved, all are Buddha. But deep sleep has fallen over us. The function of the master is not to save us but just to remind us. We should be capable of listening to Him, that's all.

There is a difference between hearing and listening. Anybody whose ears are functioning can hear, but unless our hearts are also there we can't listen. Listen with deep obedience, listen with deep trust, and listen without any thoughts. Because if we have thoughts they will interfere, they will distort. They will change the meanings of the words and they will impose their own ideas. They will only allow us to hear what our mind wants us to hear.

Listen to everything with such deep silence that you become capable of not distorting the messages that are arriving every moment. God goes on pouring His messages from everywhere.

The leaf falling from the tree is His message.

Lao Tzu became enlightened seeing a dry leaf falling from the tree. He must have been a man of tremendous silence. Just seeing the pale, old, dead leaf falling from the tree he realized that all is momentary, that life is going to end in death, that there is nothing to cling to, nothing worth clinging to, that this life which ends in death is not the truth. The leaf became the messenger of God.

In that very moment the worthless was renounced. Not that he made a deliberate decision to renounce; that is not needed. The very understanding that life is momentary, that life is futile, that life is meaningless is enough; one starts searching for another kind of life, on another plane. One has been moving outwards, now one starts moving inwards. We have been searching for joy and bliss and have been finding frustration and misery because that's what the outside can give to us. The moment we turn in, the moment we start exploring our interior, a great joy arises.

When we become silent, what is hidden starts becoming manifest. We start hearing things which are not heard ordinarily and we start seeing things which are not seen ordinarily, as if new eyes have grown in us, new ears have grown in us.

The definition of meditation is also the definition of the disciple: the art of listening to the master.

Christ was crucified. His crucifixion was really His crowning ceremony. For those who understand, for those who have eyes to see, His crucifixion was a crowning ceremony because at the last moment on the cross, He surrendered totally.

He said: 'Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.' That was His last prayer. That is surrender. To have one's own will is egoistic; to allow God's will to happen to us is surrender. To be with God and in God is to be victorious. There can be no other victory greater than this.

A master has to live through this paradox: the paradox of surrendering and realizing victory. We have all been barren and nothing has grown within us. We are all locked inside; so many blockages, so many stones and so many hindrances to growth. But we go on accumulating them, thinking them to be precious, thinking them to be diamonds. But they are not diamonds. They become a great weight on our soul; the heart is crushed underneath.

In the past, societies all over the world have praised the quality of being hard like a rock. That has been thought to be very manly. That has been praised and honored because the society needed soldiers. It needed people willing to kill and be killed by other people. It needed hard people living in the head and not in the heart. It needed people who couldn't feel, who couldn't be sensitive. Only such people can be forced to be slaves because they will function like machines. Efficient they will be, but human they will not be. Machines do not distinguish between right and wrong.

Where is the scale to measure what is right and what is wrong? There is no scale. That is why in *Sanātana Dharma* (the original name for Hinduism, which means 'eternal spiritual path'), we have two scriptures. *Sanātana Dharma* is the only courageous *dharma* (spiritual path) to have two kinds of scriptures. All other religions on the planet earth have only one kind of scripture, one book, which they call the ultimate book of books! There are many religions that say that their Holy Book can't be updated. Even software can be updated! If the book can't be updated, I don't know what to say. There are many religions that say their book can never be updated.

But *Sanātana Dharma* is the only courageous spiritual path, whose founders say that their book can be updated. They divided their scriptures into two parts: *śruti* (the *veda* or knowledge passed on by word of mouth or hearing) and *smṛti* (set in memory and writing, the code or rule books). *śrutis* are the expressions of the experience of enlightened masters and are about how to reach enlightenment. *Smṛtis*

refer to the social laws, day-to-day rules and regulations. Vedic tradition was the first courageous culture that declared that their rule-books, the *smṛtis*, can be changed. From time to time enlightened masters can create new *smṛtis* because we know that no code of morality can be adequate forever.

No law can be a law forever because morality and law are based on the situation! If the deer population becomes too high, you are allowed to hunt. In the same way, once upon a time in India, the bovine population was too high. That is why they started offering cows in sacrifices. Once the bovine population became too low, they started to worship the cows.

These rules are created to maintain equilibrium in society, to maintain harmony in society. When we all live together, we need a few basic understandings to live happily. For example, you agree not to kill me so that I agree not to kill you. That is all. We can both live happily without fear. Like this, a few basic understandings are assumed or have come into being. Slowly, by and by, they become rules. They become morality.

The problem is, as long as we understand the root or reason for morality, we neither behave immorally nor get disturbed by this morality. When we don't understand the reason for the rule, it becomes just spoon-feeding, a sort of forced rule. Then not only do we try to escape from that rule, but also whenever we break the rule, it creates a deep guilt in us. When it is a forced rule, we often try to go beyond it; for instance we often speed when we don't see a cop! Actually, there is some adventure in doing what we are not supposed to do.

A small story:

One man became addicted to smoking. He came to me asking for help, 'Swamiji, please help me to quit smoking. I don't know how I became addicted. Please help me.'

I asked him, 'How did you start?'

He replied, 'Swamiji, I never wanted to smoke. In fact, I hated the smell! One day my friend and I were talking in a street corner. My friend was smoking. My father saw us from a distance and thought that I was also smoking. When I went home he started shouting at me. He started screaming at me. I tried my best to explain to him that I was not smoking. But he was not ready to listen to me. Then I thought, anyhow, he has already shouted at me and is not willing to believe me, then why not smoke? I already had the punishment. That is why I started smoking.'

Most of the time, if we are asked not to do something, we are tempted to do it. We feel a sort of joy, a satisfaction, in doing it. That is the basic tendency in every human being.

When we say no to our parents, when we rebel, we prove we are adults. We think that as long as we say yes, we are only children. We feel we are not mature. When we say no, we think we have become mature! It is a basic tendency.

We can see this in teenagers, especially in the USA. The moment they say no they think they are grown up and mature. They feel they become mature by saying no to their parents. That is why there are so many rebellious groups, so many gangs. Because there is a deep taste of satisfaction in saying no! Saying no is almost like an addiction. When we say no, we try to prove we are somebody superior, we are somebody different. As long as morality is given to us as spoon-feeding, not with an understanding, we create two things: Firstly, we try our best to escape from it. Secondly, we create a deep guilt inside our being once we do escape.

All human beings like to break rules. It is in our nature to rebel. Most of the time people rebel without awareness, just to break rules. It is because these rules have been created without any understanding or experiential inputs from their makers.

If we look into our life, there are so many blocks that have entered the same way. There are so many speed breakers; there are so many obstacles that have entered our life without our understanding. In course of time many practices, which originally had some meaning, become rules, which no longer have any meaning!

In India, in the olden days when there was no electricity, they would not stitch clothes after sunset, because the stitching was done by hand. Naturally, in the night, in the dim light of candles or a hurricane lamp, you would not be able to stitch. But even now, in India, we see that after sunset many people won't stitch clothes! Not even in the tailor shops! There are so many tailor shops where electric lights are available. They may stitch with machines, but they won't stitch by hand after sunset.

When we don't have the understanding, practices become dead rules. When we have the understanding, any rule can become a technique to live life happily. When we have the understanding, we will see that all rules are created just to have a happy and blissful life for ourselves and other people around us. Today these very rules create hell for us because their meanings have been lost.

I have seen some people who, before starting their meditation, create such a fuss in the house: 'Keep quiet, don't shout, switch off the telephone, do this, do that.' They will practically turn the whole house upside down just for the sake of ten minutes of meditation. Do you think that they will actually do ten minutes of meditation? The moment they start, they will doze off; after two to three minutes, they will start swatting mosquitoes; after another two minutes, they will start scratching themselves. Then they will think, 'I can do the rest tomorrow. This is enough for today.'

For this, they put up such a big drama that they practically upset the whole house, without understanding that the very meditation itself is done for the sake of peace and silence. Some people, when they try to silence others, themselves create a lot of noise. Their noise will be much worse than others'. Their words, 'Hush, keep quiet!' will be louder than the people who are talking. In schools we can see that the noise made by the kids is less than that made by the teachers!

Most of the time, when we don't understand the root of morality, we start living in a dull and dead way. According to me, any rule, if it is internalized, will create guilt in us. When I say any, I mean ANY. Any rule, if it is internalized, will create a deep guilt in us, because by our nature, we aspire for freedom.

There is a profound saying, *svabhāva svatantraḥ*, which means that our nature itself is freedom. We are eternally free. We never want to be caged! We never want to be a slave of any rule!

We can see that all of society is struggling and working only towards freedom. Our entire struggle is nothing but this struggle for freedom. Even our search for money is the search for freedom. If we have more money, we have bigger choices: bigger house, bigger car, more comforts. We have more choices, therefore, we have more freedom. Our choice or freedom is the real search. Our search for money is nothing but our search for freedom. So by our very nature we are searching for freedom. We never want to be caged by any rules or any morality.

When some morality is given to us as a rule, either we try to go beyond it or if we can't, we take revenge on whoever imposed the rule on us. We always take revenge. Maybe, we wait for the right time. And at the right time, we take revenge on them.

People again and again come and tell me, 'Swamiji, my son is not listening to me.' Be very clear, your son may be your first enemy, but you may also be his, because you have given him so many rules, so many regulations. You had given

him so many rules and you controlled him when he was young. Naturally, in one part of his mind he will have respect and in the other part he will always feel resentment towards you. That other part will be just waiting to take revenge on you. Because you gave him rules and regulations, he will rebel against you.

Some people try to give us the rules in a very subtle or cunning way. They will exploit our greed and fear by showing us heaven and hell and by creating the desire for heaven and the fear of hell. They will create so many concepts of hell and heaven in us. They will say, 'If you practise these types of things you will be rewarded with heaven; if you practise those types of things you will be punished with hell.' This concept of heaven and hell is a subtle way of exploiting our being. When we are given some rules based on greed and fear, a deep guilt is created in us.

One more thing... This is one of the ultimate laws, which is very difficult to understand but I repeat, one of the ultimate laws. No one can live one's life based on any law. When I say no one, I mean *nobody*. When I say any law, I mean *any* law. Life is far above laws. All the laws, rules and regulations are based on some understanding of life. But life is beyond all our understanding and beyond our logic.

People ask me, 'Why was this life created at all?' I tell them, this 'why' can never be answered. Because this 'why' is based on our logic. But life is based on God's logic. Our logic and God's logic can never meet. His logic is so big, so vast and so infinite. We can never meet His logic.

God has created life. Humans have created rules. Naturally, our laws can never match or fit in with God's logic or the life created by God. Life is natural. Laws are societal. Life is physical. Laws are mental. So all our ideas, all our do's and don'ts, all our morality, all our right or wrong is given to us by society. We are called saints or sinners only by society.

As long as society titles us as a saint, we are saints. The moment society titles us as a sinner, we are sinners. If we kill someone in society, we will be called murderers. We will be punished. If we kill someone on the war front, we will be called heroes. We will be rewarded with a big award! So, the moral structure is societal. When we start internalizing the laws of society in our mind, we create a deep wound in our being. We destroy our intelligence. According to me, all our morality, rules and regulations are only superficial. It is only skin deep. Look a little deeper!

Our nature is always struggling to express, to go beyond all rules, all regulations and all morality. Our consciousness is always trying to break through our conscience. Our consciousness continuously fights with our conscience. Conscience is societal. Consciousness is natural. Conscience is a poor substitute for consciousness.

People ask me, 'What are you doing, *Swamiji*? You are breaking the basic laws. You are pulling down the whole social structure. You are pulling down all the rules and regulations. Then how can we all live morally? How will people live with morality? What are you doing?'

I tell them, be very clear, we need forced morality only for kids. To children we need to say, 'Keep quiet, I will give you candy.' Of course, nowadays kids say, 'I am happy. I don't need your candy. Who cares for your candy?' To a kid you can say, 'I will give candy,' or 'I will punish you.' On kids we can impose morality based on fear or greed.

But now, we are not kids anymore! It is time to stand up and be moral based on understanding, and not based on fear and greed. As long as our morality is based on fear and greed, be very sure that it is just skin deep.

We can never be moral based on fear and greed. If fear and greed is the base for morality, we will try all possible ways to escape from it. For instance we will drive ten miles over the speed limit, thinking that if we see the cop, we can slow down. As long as our morality is based on fear and greed, be sure we are children. We are not mature. If we are really grown up, our morality should be based on understanding and not based on fear and greed.

According to me, a mature person is one who lives a happy, blissful and quiet life without fear and greed. When we drop our fear and greed, a new kind of morality arises in our being. This morality is not societal morality. This is not just skin-deep morality. It arises out of our whole being. Our whole being experiences a different kind of wellbeing.

When religion or society brands us as a born sinner, there is something seriously wrong with its philosophy. It negates the very spirit of a human being, which is divine. Yes, the body-mind system can be polluted and corrupted; but the body-mind system is perishable and changeable. The spirit within is pure and incorruptible. When this is understood, the individual will work towards his

upliftment and the realization of his own divine, sin-free Self. Without this understanding, all that will happen is a self-fulfilling prophecy which will further mire him in depression and negativity.

We have enough negativity and depression in this world without religion and society adding to it. The purpose of religion should be to uplift and enlighten, not to frighten and control.

So I say to you, we are no sinners; we never were and never will be.

We are eternal bliss, *nityānanda*!



Krishna, Yadava, My Friend

11.41 Arjuna says: Whatever I have rashly said from carelessness or love, addressing You as Krishna, Yadava, my Friend

Regarding You merely as a friend, unaware of this greatness of Yours.

11.42 In whatever way I may have insulted You in fun, while at play, resting, sitting, or at meals,

When alone with You or in company, O Achuta, O Immeasurable One, I implore You to forgive me.

11.43 You are the Father of this world, moving and unmoving. You are to be adored by this world. You are the greatest Guru; there is none who exists equal to You.

O Being of unequalled power, how then can there be another, superior to You in the three worlds?

11.44 Therefore, bowing down, I prostrate my body before You and crave Your forgiveness, adorable Lord.

Even as a father forgives his son, a friend his friend, a lover his beloved, You should, O Deva, forgive me.

Arjuna is afraid again. Having seen what he has seen and understanding the unlimitedness of Krishna's form, he remembers that all this while he had treated Krishna like a friend, so casually. Remorse fills his being.

Arjuna's worry is not fear of any reprisal, now that he knows who Krishna is. It is guilt that bothers him.

‘I called You by Your caste name, Yadava,’ Arjuna cries out, ‘I called You, ‘Hey friend, Hey Krishna’. I knew not Whom I was addressing, Whom I was dealing with. Please forgive me.’

‘How could I have done this? Please forgive me for the love I had for You that made me careless in addressing You. Bear with me; forgive me as a father would a son, a lover his beloved and a friend, his mate.

A small story:

With great sincerity and seriousness a devotee of Shiva offered prayers to Shiva’s idol at his home altar every day for many years. He had no thought other than Shiva, and all he desired was to have Shiva’s vision, His *darśan* one day or the other.

Since nothing happened year after year and he was getting old, the devotee gave Shiva an ultimatum, ‘Either you appear before me or I will seek an alternative. Before I die I need to have the Lord’s *darśan* so that I may be liberated.’

Shiva still made no appearance.

After a few days the devotee bought and installed an idol of Vishnu at his altar, replacing Shiva. But he did not have the heart to throw Shiva away, and merely moved Him to one corner, telling Him, ‘See, I waited all this while patiently; all this is Your fault.’

The next morning, he lit incense as usual and placed it before the altar, this time in front of the idol of Vishnu. To his irritation he found that the incense smoke was drifting towards the corner where he had cast out Shiva. ‘You need no incense!’ he cried out, and covered the nose of the idol to prevent it from smelling the incense.

The next moment he felt Shiva standing in front of him, smiling. The devotee was overcome with deep guilt and overwhelming emotion. ‘Lord!’ he cried, ‘All these years I prayed to You without fail and You never appeared to me. Today, when I cast You out and covered Your nose You gave me *darśan*. Why?’

Shiva said: ‘It is only today that I became real to you, when you covered My nose. That is why I came to you now.’

As his friend, Krishna was the reality to Arjuna. He took liberties with his friend because He was so real to him. But his updated intelligence of Krishna’s

cosmic form shook him up so badly that he was now consumed by guilt. It was because of the intense devotion that Arjuna had for Krishna, that Krishna gave him the invaluable gift of His divine form. Had Krishna not considered him worthy, Arjuna would not have seen his cosmic form.

All our life, guilt rules us from our past. Whatever we do at a point in time, we do with the intelligence available to us at that point in time. At a later point in time, we look back and remember with the additional knowledge that we have gained since then. Often, what we did before seems wrong to us and we feel guilty.

There is no greater sin than carrying such guilt. What we did was not sinful; to carry the guilt with us is sinful. When we drop the guilt and move on with awareness, a deep imprint is made within us which is far more powerful than carrying the guilt. The guilt dropped brings a far greater awareness of what not to do again.

Arjuna is demonstrating to the rest of us the power of guilt; in this case guilt that seems to arise from the deepest of love. In one sense he does not wish to carry that guilt with him. He drops it in front of his friend, Lord and master saying, 'Forgive me.'

Fear concerns the future. We can never be afraid of the past; it is dead and gone. Guilt and remorse plague us from the past. Every single thing that we did could have been done differently. We need not have done it or we could have done it differently. One by one these negativities pour out of Arjuna and he is getting cleansed in the presence of the master.

*Q: You said that one of the five **bhāvas**, moods, in which one approaches a master or **iṣṭadevatā** is **sakha bhāva** or friendship. Why then is Arjuna afraid of having expressed that friendship?*

Arjuna is in fact one of the greatest examples of *sakha bhāva*, friendship relationship between master and disciple.

It is the immediate effect of realizing the true nature of Krishna, especially in His destructive form, that terrifies Arjuna, that makes him afraid.

Sakha bhāva is not a relationship of equals. A disciple cannot be equal to a master. Even when a disciple becomes enlightened and in that sense at the same level as the master, the mood of the disciple would be one of sheer gratitude. It is after enlightenment that a disciple realizes the true nature of the master and the

real master-disciple relationship flowers. The disciple imbibes the nature of his master, he communes with the master and this is how the lineage of great masters is sustained.

Friendship is not a permanent relationship. It is not a biological relationship as between a mother and child. It is not a contractual relationship as between husband and wife. It need not be the being-level relationship as between lovers. It can be a societal relationship born out of convenience and comfort. As with all societal relationships it can change.

Friends become enemies. We cannot truly have an enemy who has not formerly been a friend. There is a greater chance of two very good friends becoming hateful enemies rather than two unrelated people. Unfulfilled expectations between friends create far bigger problems and far deeper enmity than between those who have not developed bonds of friendship. If a stranger cheats us, we may accept it or take action as is appropriate. There is no great emotion involved except perhaps anger, at being taken for a ride.

When someone we consider a friend does something we consider disloyal, all hell breaks loose. We may even want to destroy that person. In addition to anger there are a host of other emotions that crowd us: pain, grief, depression, regret, guilt and so on. We can go through a state of mourning, passing from anger to depression to final acceptance, or we can move to a mode of deep vengeance. Disloyalty from a friend can corrode us as no enmity can.

It is also possible that those we consider enemies may turn out to be friends. This may not happen as often as friends turn into enemies, but with proper conditioning of the mind this can happen. As I mentioned earlier, when I enquire of potential healers ready to be initiated to think of enemies wanting to be healed by them, most of them answer that they cannot think of anyone as an enemy. The Nithyananda Spurana Program or LBP Level 2 that they attend before the Healers' Initiation Program does a good job of destroying their *saṁskāras*, their negative conditioning, by removing all negativities including enmity. Check with any Nithya Spiritual Healer and they will confirm this.

In true *sakha bhāva*, everyone is a friend, not just the master. One turns non-judgmental and respects everyone around as an expression of divinity. In one sense this is the problem that Arjuna has in waging war with his clansmen, who are his enemies. As an extension of his *sakha bhāva* relationship with Krishna, he finds it difficult to hate his clansmen enough to fight and kill them. He gives many reasons but these reasons are only excuses.

Arjuna is no coward. He is the greatest warrior. Killing is second nature to him. But destroying a friend is not. His innate devotion to Krishna extends to the Kauravas and he finds it difficult to keep this friendship feeling aside on the battlefield.

In these verses, Arjuna also expresses the fear that his mode of friendship may have been tinged with dislike or enmity or anger at some point in time. Though he seeks forgiveness for having called Krishna his friend or a Yadava, etc., these are not really good reasons for a good friend to apologize, even if the friend turns out to be God.

However, if Arjuna has some hidden fear that at some point the friendship may have turned into feelings of enmity, even if unconsciously, he has reason to worry and seek forgiveness.

There are many real life incidents when people have helped others without knowing who they are. It is said that once the owner of a big hotel group, who liked to travel incognito, visited one of his smaller hotels. The bell boy, not knowing who he was, but concerned about this old person walking in on a wintry night without adequate warm clothing, went out of his way to help him and make him feel comfortable. The ending is obvious. The bellboy was promoted and eventually became the head of the hotel group.

But imagine the state of the bellboy once he learns that the old man he met was the big boss, but he has not been rewarded yet for his Good Samaritan act. He would have been filled with worries about what mistakes he might have committed. The help he provided would have been at the back of his mind. The danger of his losing his job in case he had goofed up would have been paramount.

Such was Arjuna's state. He doesn't know yet where he stands. Krishna has revealed Himself as the supreme God to him. Arjuna knows at the back of his mind that he had not always had noble thoughts about Krishna. This is how we all treat God as well. As long as God provides us with what we want, we worship him. The moment our requests don't get fulfilled, the Divine becomes a stone idol. It is the same with a master. If you get healed, if you prosper, the master is good. If not, what good is the master? Prayers turn to insults and curses.

Arjuna is in transition. He represents the person who is about to move from the intellectual seeker level to the devotee and disciple stage. In fact, he has already moved after the Vision. There is no longer any doubt in him about Krishna's identity. Until Krishna showed him His divine form, it was theory to Arjuna. Now after the Vision, it is completely real. He has moved from *sakha bhāva*, friendship, to *mahā bhāva*, an enlightened relationship. It is this transition that brings out the residual guilt in him.



Your Familiar Form

11.45 After seeing this form which I have never seen before I am filled with gladness but at the same time I am disturbed by fear.

Please bestow Your grace upon me and show me Your form as the supreme Personality, O Lord of Lords, O Refuge of the universe.

11.46 O thousand armed universal form! I wish to see Your form with crown, four-armed with mace and disc in Your hand.

I yearn to see You in that form.

Arjuna now makes his final plea in these verses.

‘Show me Your form that I am familiar with,’ he says, ‘the One that I am comfortable with. I am grateful and overwhelmed by the Visions that You have shown me, but what I am comfortable with is Your four-handed form holding the discus and mace, as the Protector of the universe. I am not comfortable, I am indeed fearful of the terrifying form of You as the Destroyer, however real it may be.’

All of us are in the same situation as Arjuna. We all have fixed ideas of what divinity is, what motherhood is, what love is and what friendship is. Divinity is benign, comforting, protecting, nurturing, forgiving and all that is sweet and nice. So are motherhood, love and friendship.

Existence does not work that way. Existence does not differentiate between good and bad, between beautiful and ugly. It is we who make judgments and create emotions within us to promote those judgments.

In the Vishnu Sahasranama, which is recited by Bhishma as he was awaiting his liberation, he describes Vishnu as ‘*śāntākāraṁ bhujaga śayanaṁ padmanābhaṁ sureśaṁ*’.

‘Peaceful, emanating bliss...’ is how Vishnu, whose incarnation Krishna is, is described. Just the very words bring to us so much peace and calmness!

If instead, Bhishma had used words to describe the fearsome attributes of Vishnu such as:

‘Frightful destroyer, with burning mouths...’ and so on, how many would recite the *Sahasranāma*? It is a different matter that most people who go through the motions of reading and reciting the thousand names of Vishnu do not understand a word of what they are saying! So they are safe, whatever Bhishma may have said.

But if you do understand what the words mean, and if you are not in equilibrium, you will be disturbed. These words, understood to be negative by your logical mind, will create severe emotional turbulence within you.

A *yogi* is one who has passed beyond these turbulences. He understands that the Divine is without attributes, neither peaceful and comforting, nor fearful and terrifying. These manifestations are also illusions. Beyond and behind these apparent manifestations, Divinity just is. It is beyond the three *guṇas*.

Arjuna at this point in time is yet to reach this stage. He still seeks the safety and comfort of the four-handed divine Protector that he is used to, rather than the terrifying *Mahākāla*.

When we realize that both are masks of the Divine, that neither is His true Self and that both are His true Self, then and only then are we rid of illusions, and are liberated.

Q: Swamiji, I am a mother of young children. Can you advise me on how to bring them up the right way?

Our whole effort is always to project our desires on our children. Our own dreams are unfulfilled, because dreams are never going to be fulfilled, so we project them on our children, we hope that what has not happened to us will happen to them. The same has been the case with your parents and the same will be the case with your children when they become parents.

Helping the child to go beyond dreaming, beyond fantasies, should be the basic function of the mother, the father, both the parents. Normally we do just the

contrary: we help the child to become more ambitious, more egoistic. We condition them to live in greed and fear and train them to fantasize.

For centuries, from one generation to the next generation, parents have continued giving hopes, ambitions and desires that basically can't be fulfilled. To be really helpful to the child, we have to understand this. Have no more projections; don't load the child with your dreams. Help him to see the futility of all dreams. Then each child can become a Buddha - each child is *meant* to become a Buddha. It is because of wrong conditioning, wrong society and wrong education that we hinder their growth into Buddhahood.

In Japan they have a certain art. It should not be called art, it is cruel, but they call it the art of *bonsai*. They grow trees in small pots. Big trees, which if grown in the soil would reach to the clouds, are grown in small pots that have no bottoms, and they go on cutting their roots. These miniature trees in Japan, four-hundred-year-old trees, are just six inches high.

If you cut the roots, how can they grow? They think that this is an art and many people all over the world appreciate it. People go to see those trees and they think something great has been done! They are centuries old and the gardeners have been keeping them generation after generation. The older the tree, if it is not allowed to grow, the more artful it is understood to be.

They used to do something similar to human beings in Imperial China. They broke the feet of noble ladies and bound them so that they could not grow. The feet remained the size of a child's feet, and could not support the weight of an adult. These ladies were literally disabled; all this in the name of beauty and fashion.

They do the same thing today in the fashion world. They starve themselves and they vomit what they eat, so that they can be painfully thin. Young women think they are ugly if they are more than skin and skeleton.

This is the way society has conditioned people, especially children. But that is the situation of every child in the world; those *bonsai* trees are very representative. What do we do to children? We cut their roots. We want to help but we are so unconscious that our help is a hindrance, not help at all.

So this is going to be your work. This will help *you* to wake up and this will help the child to grow in the right direction.

The time has now come to go beyond the mind. Mind is our bondage. Mind means the past, and to go beyond the mind means to live in the present. Slip out of the past; don't allow it to interfere anymore, because to love through the past is to live a dead life. The past is dead. Living through the past is living in a grave. That's why there is so much misery in the world and so much deadness, insensitivity, unconsciousness: people are not really alive. They are not flowering; there seems to be no growth happening.

They are simply born, and vegetate and one day they die. Their whole life consists of very meaningless activities, trivia. They don't attain any significance. They can't say in the end that life has been a great benediction. They go frustrated, disappointed, disillusioned, but nobody is responsible for it except themselves. If we live through the mind this is going to happen.

Start living the life of meditation, and meditation means the life of no-mind. Don't allow thoughts to interfere. Be in *direct* contact with Existence: with trees, with rocks, rivers, people. Become a child again; then the circle is complete.

One is born as a child; one should die as a child. Jesus says, 'Unless you are like small children you will not enter into My kingdom of God.' He is absolutely right. The really ripe and mature person is one who, in his old age, again becomes as innocent as a child. The circle is complete: life has come to its ultimate peak and we are ready to go back home.

If the circle is incomplete we will have to be born again, because the circle *has* to be completed; that is the task that has been given to us. Unless we fulfil it, God cannot call us back. This is our work in life: to become a child again, innocent, full of wonder and awe. The mind is good as a mechanism; use it but don't be used by it. Don't become its servant and don't be possessed by it. Remain the master.

Become a child to guide your child. Recover your lost innocence. Drop your own conditioning so that you can bring up your children as unconditioned beings.

Scientists tell us that until the age of adolescence children still operate with the brains in the alpha pattern. All adult brains work at beta brain wave frequency (about 13 to 20 Hertz). Alpha is between 8 and 12 Hertz. When they are younger the frequency of brain waves is even less, in delta and theta, which are the state of dreaming and deep sleep. In these low-frequency states the individual is highly influencible. Anything any person says, especially an older person with authority, is never questioned.

This is the scientific basis for conditioning of children; this is how conditioning by parents, teachers and elders happens. This is how our *saṁskāra* are built up. Over generations this *saṁskāra* burden is no longer that of an individual parent, the father or mother. It becomes a tribal or cultural or religious *saṁskāra*. They become injunctions and commandments. They become the tools for controlling people.

That is what happens when we bring up our children. We control them on behalf of our society and religion, because this is how we have been brought up. We do not know any better. However unhappy we are with the circumstances of our own life, knowing fully well that the way we have been brought up has caused us miseries, we still inflict the same rules upon our children. It is simply because we are like deer caught in the headlights of a car. We seem frozen in our responses.

If you seriously wish to bring up your children instead of bringing them down as most parents do, drop your own conditioning. Drop all your parental, societal and religious conditioning. All you have to lose is your fear and greed. You will then stop perpetuating the chain of destruction. You will stop spreading the destruction of spirit and allow enlightenment to blossom.



Only You Have Seen This Form

11.47 Bhagavan said: Dear Arjuna, I have favoured you with this Transcendental form within the material world of My internal power.

No one before you has seen this unlimited, brilliant form.

11.48 O best among Kuru warriors, no one has ever before seen this universal form of Mine, for neither by studying the Vedas nor by performing sacrifices or charities, can this form be seen.

Only you have seen this form.

11.49 Do not be disturbed any longer by seeing this terrible form of Mine.

Dear devotee, be free from all disturbances. With a peaceful mind, you can now see the form you wish to see.

Krishna consoles Arjuna in these verses. He is again His compassionate Self to His disturbed disciple.

He tells Arjuna that no one, but no one, has had this great privilege of seeing His cosmic form that He had just displayed to Arjuna. No penances, no rituals, no amount of scriptural reading and no other charities would gain this Vision for any one. 'However, you are terrified. That is ok. See Me now in My normal form that you are used to worshipping.'

Krishna is clear on this point. It is He who decides how He reveals Himself to His devotees and disciples. It is a gift from the master, from the Divine. It is not earned through effort. Of course, effort prepares one for the receipt of this great gift, but it is not the only necessary condition for the gift to be showered.

Let me share another experience with you.

During my spiritual wandering in my earlier days, when I wandered the length and breadth of India, many thousand kilometers, I stayed for several months in Haridwar. I stayed under a bridge, sleeping on a concrete bench. There was a small Shiva idol under this bridge, which was on the banks of the sacred river Ganga. Not many people came to this location.

I took ill and had high fever as well as severe dysentery. I could not even move. I thought I was going to die. A young man suddenly appeared on the scene and started talking to me. He was very handsome and had tremendous grace. What I remembered in particular was a diamond-studded pen that he had in his shirt pocket. I found it incongruous since this man was otherwise very simply dressed.

This man brought me medicines and food for three days while I lay too ill to move. He would sit down and talk to me. I asked him his name and where he lived. He said he was called Shankar Maharaj and that he lived in a nearby ashram, which I vaguely knew.

Once it looked that I was getting better, this man stopped coming. After a few days when I was well enough to move freely, I decided to go to his ashram and thank him. I found the ashram without much trouble. It had three or four rooms on the banks of the Ganga and there was an old *sanyāsi* sitting there. I asked him for Shankar Maharaj but he said that there was no one of that name living there!

The old man was not too keen to talk. I persisted. He then said only three other old *sanyāsis* stayed there and no young man lived there. When I still persisted he blurted out with irritation, 'The only Shankar Maharaj here sits there.' I went over to where he pointed. There was a small Shiva temple, where inside was a white marble statue of Shiva sitting. As I went nearer I was amazed to see the same pen that the young man wore, tucked into a cloth that they had put on the Shiva statue's shoulder!

I could not believe what I saw. I went back to the old man and asked him why there was a pen on Shiva's statue. He simply said that some devotee had brought that pen and he had placed it on Shiva.

The Shankar Maharaj who came to feed me and give me medicines when I was too ill to even move was wearing the same pen that this statue wore. You can draw your own conclusions. This is the honest truth.

Years later, when I went with a group of devotees to the Himalayas in 2005, I told them about this incident. I wanted to locate this temple but we were hard-

pressed for time. Again when we went with another group in 2006, I decided we should look for it. After an early morning bath in the Ganga, we walked and after some searching found the bridge and the small Shiva idol in the place where I lay ill.

From there I had a vague idea of where this ashram was. I knew it was near Gita Mandir. We walked a few more miles and enquired at the Gita Mandir about this ashram. All I knew was that this ashram had a small Shiva temple and it was on the banks of the Ganga. The person at the Gita Mandir told us to go out through their rear gate and look nearby.

Whenever we asked about a Shiva temple, every passerby would point to the next house, because there was a temple in almost every house. Finally we came to a place, a large ashram that I thought looked familiar. Two of the disciples went inside and started looking. They talked to a number of people. They found one temple, which was not what I remembered. They started looking again. The rest of us, a party of about ten people, followed. Suddenly they came back running and said that there was a Shiva statue inside a small enclosure on the banks of the Ganga.

When we reached this place it was exactly as I remembered. The old ashram with its four rooms was still there. The temple with the white marble Shiva idol was still there. When some from our group offered some money, the priest tucked the money under a cloth that he had wrapped on Shiva's shoulder. This was where I had seen the diamond-studded pen!

We asked the priest if he remembered the incident when I had come looking for Shankar Maharaj. He was quite old, and even if he was the same old man who had met me, he did not remember anything. But the Shiva was still called Shankar Maharaj!

There is nothing to believe or not believe in this incident where Shiva Himself came to take care. It happened, that is all. It did not happen as a result of any prayer or any penance. I have no idea why it happened. That is how things happen in Existence. You have to take it as it comes.

Of course, in this chapter Arjuna seeks Krishna's Vision and it happens. It could have also happened without his seeking. The favor is for the Divine to give, not because we ask.

It does not matter to Krishna that Arjuna seemingly spurns this gift and would like to see Him as He normally does. What Krishna offered was an unconditional gift that required neither acceptance nor appreciation.

A mother's love for her child does not happen as a result of any effort on the child's part. The presence of the child spontaneously evokes the deep unconditional love of the mother for the child.

It is ultimately the surrender of the devotee to the master, like the surrender of the infant to the mother, that evokes this unconditional love. In the case of an infant, it is a reflex action. The nature of an infant is to be defenseless and in absolute surrender to the caregiver. In the case of a devotee, the studied patterns of mental behavior need to be given up. This is far more difficult.

The devotee has to return to his original and natural state of surrender to experience unconditional love. To achieve this he has to drop his mind. He has to give up all the studied behavior patterns, both conscious and unconscious. When the mind is wiped clean of its templates of comparison, it makes no difference if the Divine appears to be loving or terrifying. In both aspects one accepts divinity.

Krishna leads His disciple in stages through this path of Self-Realization, which is no different from the realization of the Divine.

Q: Vishnu and Lakshmi are almost always worshipped in gentle and beautiful forms. Shiva and Kali, however, are in austere and fearful forms. Does this mean that Shiva and Kali are in a higher form?

First of all, you need to understand that in whatever form you worship a deity, in stone, metal, wood or whatever else, you are not worshipping that idol or picture. You are worshipping the energy behind and beyond that idol or picture *through* that idol or picture. This is one of the most misunderstood aspects of our culture, leading people to say that we worship idols and that we are pagans.

No one can, however much they may like to believe so, understand the formless and worship the formless until and unless they have progressed from the identification with the form. You will find that even those who profess to be praying to the formless turn to a particular direction or visualize something in

form. Why? Simply because it is practically impossible to go straight to the formless stage without a foundation involving some form.

After all, what is your perception of God and Divinity based on? These are idle concepts.

A disciple of Ramakrishna complained to Vivekananda, a fellow disciple, and asked him why he called Ramakrishna 'God' in public. Vivekananda asked this man to explain what he understood by 'God'. This man replied that God is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent.

Vivekananda retorted, 'You fool! The omnipresent God is forever present in Ramakrishna. To you, God is just a concept. To Ramakrishna, God is a living reality. He lives with God all the time.'

It may sound fashionable and cool to denigrate idol worship without knowing what it is all about. The entire art of building temples is not a mere art, it is a science; temple architecture is a highly developed science. Every single facet of it, from the size of the idols and the size of the rooms and courtyards, the directions in which each has to be situated, to the process of installing the idol in the sanctum, all these are laid down in detail in manuals that were developed thousands of years ago.

In the temple of Brihadishwara in Tanjore, one of the largest temples in India, at any time the shadow of the main tower falls within itself, never on the ground! In many temples the sun shines through openings and falls on the main idol at specific days of the year at specific times. Many temples are built with thousand-pillared halls, in which the stone pillars, when struck, sound the exact notes of music. Modern day architecture does not have the methodology to recreate these feats.

Temples are energy bodies, as are idols. They receive, store and radiate energy. They are mass meditation centers to help all those who cannot or will not practice meditation by themselves. They initiate you into an awareness of cosmic consciousness through the form. To move beyond, you need to drop the form.

In our system of meditation, all meditations are formless. There are no *mantras*, no visualization of forms. But this requires some understanding, some awareness before practice.

When one chooses a form, invariably one chooses a form for a quality that one lacks and is in need of. It may also be based on one's *saṁskāra*, *vāsanā* and unfulfilled desires. A person who chooses Vishnu and Lakshmi to worship, is

clearly in need of money, as they both represent material pleasure and wealth. One seeks Kali when one needs courage. One chooses Shiva when one seeks the path of wisdom. The choice is a reflection of one's needs and not one's state.

Traditionally in Bengal, Kali has been worshipped as the Mother goddess. They relate to her compassion and relate to her without any fear. Even in Vishnu worship, there are temples dedicated to Vishnu as Narasimha, his incarnation as half-lion, half-man.

In general, it is true that it is easier to relate to a form that exudes happiness and love. That is why Krishna and Ganesha are the most popular amongst the deities. But whichever form you worship, be aware that the energy behind all forms is the same, and ultimately it is the formless energy that you are worshipping.

The energy of all deities and idols is one. There is absolutely no difference. In fact, the energy of all masters is the same. There is no difference between the energy of a Krishna, a Buddha, a Mahavira and a Christ. It is we who perceive these differently, feel them differently and express them differently.

The energy as well as the message of all these great masters is one of love and compassion. One cannot be a master or a divine being without being full of love and compassion. No master and no divine being can advocate violence and harm to others. Terrorism is not a word in the dictionary of any spiritual being, let alone a great master, and therefore cannot be part of the teaching of any great master. All those who indulge in violence in the name of religion or the words of their masters are misinterpreting, distorting and violating the truths that their masters propounded.

Krishna's universal form was displayed not to frighten Arjuna, though it did frighten him. It was displayed to demonstrate to Arjuna the supreme truth of the universe, of Existence. Krishna merely displayed the neutrality of Existence, by showing that destruction follows creation, and creation follows destruction. Such is Nature.

The fearsome form of Kali is the outer expression of the experience of destroying one's ego, which is the body She dances on. A master too is ruthless in destroying the ego of a disciple who comes to him. That is the nature of the master. Those who are afraid need to stay away.

It is easy to intellectually accept these truths. It is easy to say, I surrender to the master and he can do whatever he wants. It is easy to say that you are not uncomfortable with the process. But the surrender and the acceptance last only as long as it does not cause discomfort to you. When the master calls, you will have a hundred other things to do. As long as the master is a weekend master, and preferably an alternate-weekend master, synchronized with your other plans, he is acceptable to you. Otherwise he is a nuisance.

Do not worry about who is a higher form: Shiva or Vishnu, Lakshmi or Kali. They are all the same form and the same energy. They wear different makeup to suit your personality and the occasion, that is all. Go beyond the form; grasp the formless energy and surrender. You will be in bliss.



Only In This Way Can You Reach Me

11.50 Sanjaya said: Krishna, while speaking to Arjuna, revealed His form with four arms,

Then assuming His human form He consoled the terrified Arjuna.

11.51 Arjuna said: Seeing this wonderful human form,

My mind is now calm and I am restored to my original nature.

11.52 Bhagavan said: The four-armed form that you have seen is rare to behold.

Even the celestials are forever aspiring to see this form.

11.53 The four-armed form that you have seen with your transcendental eyes cannot be understood simply by study of the Vedas, nor by undergoing penances or charity or worship;

One cannot see Me as I am by these means.

11.54 My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can you understand Me as I am, standing before you, being seen directly.

Only in this way can you reach Me.

11.55 My dear Arjuna, one who is engaged entirely in My devotional service, free from attachment, full of love for every entity, surely comes to Me.

This statement coming from the mouth of Krishna may be taken as the simple, direct truth.

Krishna now appears in front of Arjuna first in His four-handed beautiful divine form that Arjuna is comfortable with, and finally as Vasudeva Krishna, in His gentle human form that Arjuna is so familiar with.

But the familiarity ends there. Having seen what Krishna really is through His divine form of Narayana, with four arms bearing the discus and mace, and also in His terrifying cosmic form as *Mahākāla*, Arjuna now has an understanding of the unlimited magnitude of the personality in front of him.

In whatever form Krishna now appears, this understanding would remain with Arjuna. It is said that when Krishna was born to Devaki, He presented to her and Vasudeva, His father, His form with four hands to comfort them in their captivity, and later changed it to the human form.

Arjuna has now seen Krishna in all His forms. The true universal form of *virata rūpa* or *viśvarūpa*, that Arjuna found fearsome; the beautiful, much gentler, adorable form with four hands (bearing mace and discus in two hands, and the other two hands signifying protection and the giving of boons), and finally back to the human form that Arjuna has always known.

Krishna says even the great sages, the enlightened masters have not seen the sights that Arjuna has seen. That is very true. Enlightened masters cannot see visions. When an enlightened being sees another enlightened being, it is in the energy form. To be able to see the gross physical form, both need to readjust their frequencies.

When one of our people saw Mahavatar Baba in the Himalayas, she saw Him in the human form. A devotee is able to see the form as physical and real since the master adjusts His frequency to the visionary capacities of the devotee, or as in the case of Arjuna, gives him divine vision to perceive the cosmic form.

For other people, no amount of spiritual practices and knowledge can make this happen. This is the space of *bhakti*, pure devotion.

Ramakrishna says about one's relationship to a master: 'The love of a chaste wife for her husband, the attachment of a miser to his hoarded wealth, the craving of a pleasure seeker for sensual pleasures, all these rolled into one and directed towards the master is true *bhakti*, devotion.'

Krishna concludes this chapter with a clear direction of what a devotee should do to reach Him. It is as simple as 1, 2, 3.

'Work for Me,' He says, 'work for My mission. Surrender to Me as the supreme with no reservations. Have no attachment to whatever you do, leave the results to Me, surrender the fruits of your action to Me. Look upon everyone as your own Self, without dislike and hatred.'

What Krishna says here is very significant. 'Work for Me,' He says. 'He who works for Me comes to Me.' All disciples and devotees must understand this. Devotion is not about keeping a statue or a photo and praying to it. You can be a gazer all your life and nothing will come out of it. What is needed in addition are effort and sincerity in action that are in tune with what the master teaches.

I tell my disciples:

'If you sit and gaze at me and feel joyful seeing my form, you are chasing me. At best you get eye candy and brain candy, sweet words and a sweet form that makes you feel happy. Then you think I will be leaving soon and feel unhappy. You miss the present moment of my being with you and speculate with regret on my absence that may follow.'

'If instead, you work for my mission, spreading my word and teachings, I shall chase you. I shall always be with you, wherever you are! You do not even need to come to me. I shall come to you.'

May the blessings of the supreme Lord be upon you all!

Q: Swamiji, the vision Krishna gave Arjuna, is it the same as what Christianity and other religions describe through the word grace? It is such a beautiful word brimming with meaning. Can you please elaborate?

Ma, grace is one of the greatest mysteries of life. Grace just happens; it can never be created. Grace is the flowering of our being, just the way a lotus opens up to the sun. It can never be forced, never just imagined.

Please understand, when our inner awareness rises to its peak, we become silent, we become compassionate, we become blissful. When this happens in us unbidden, the total effect within our mind-body is grace, and this grace radiates from every cell, every pore of our system.

The individual does not have to be beautiful by dictionary definition. It is not external beauty. This beauty that comes from within is grace.

Take for example a chimney lamp. Till the flame is lit, we see only the outer glass covering. At this stage, we say, 'He is handsome, she is ugly', etc. All we see is the outer cover. Then the lamp is lit. We then see the beauty of the flame. That is where real beauty is. That is grace, the inner flame, the true inner beauty. The

light radiates throughout the mind-body and then the material mind-body matters no more. There is a beautiful inner aura that surrounds us.

Grace is so misunderstood. It is not outward beauty as we think. It is always from within. Our words will no longer be just words, they will be music. Our anger will be energy. Our laughter will be ecstasy.

Grace happens when we trust Existence. In the space where there is no mind and no thoughts, grace just descends. It will surround us. It will follow us.

When Arjuna was ready, when his mind turned silent finally, grace descended on him from the supreme Lord. There was nothing that he did, that he needed to do. When he was ready, it just happened. That is the way it works with all masters. When we are in tune with them, their grace descends on us. We are then a different person. We are indeed reborn.

Just be patient and wait. When you are ready grace will come.

MEDITATION:

I think it is now time for us to meditate to experience what Arjuna is seeing. Once again the two points:

Is it possible to experience Krishna consciousness? Yes, it *is* possible.

What is the qualification? Our being present here is enough.

Now all we need to do is put our whole consciousness intensely into the meditation.

The meditation will take at least 20 minutes. If you feel you cannot or do not want to sit for 20 minutes, you are free to leave.

If you can do so, we shall enter into the meditation. Please don't leave in between. Please sit straight and close your eyes. I shall guide you step by step.

Pray intensely to the *Parabrahma Krishna*, universal consciousness, in whatever name you know, in whatever form you know. Pray to that energy to give a glimpse of His being to you, a glimpse of the experience that Arjuna received and which all the enlightened masters experienced.

Pray to the universal energy. It responds to your thoughts. Don't think your prayers are dead words. They are living communication.

Inhale and exhale as slowly as possible and as deeply as possible. Concentrate and bring your attention between your eyebrows, on your *ājñā cakra*. Slowly, but very deeply concentrate on your *ājñā cakra*. Without forcing yourself, put your awareness naturally on your *ājñā cakra*.

Slowly start visualizing the whole universe moving inside your head. Feel this clearly inside your head.

The space that is in front of you, in your inner space, the whole universe is moving. See the sun, moon and all the planets. Visualize this clearly, intensely. Slowly relax the body, be one with the universal consciousness. Feel the experience of being one with the universe.

You are seeing clearly the sun, moon, stars and planets. Just disappear into the universal consciousness. Forget your name, your form, all the conditionings, your profession, your gender and your country, everything about yourself. Forget your identity and see the whole universe intensely. Just see the moving universe intensely, all the planets, the stars, all the suns, moons.

Disappear into the universal consciousness. Lose the identity, the root cause of all the thoughts; let it disappear into the universal consciousness. Experience the bliss, the fulfilling bliss of the whole universe. Expand and disappear into that universe.

Dissolve into the universal consciousness. Be in *nityānanda*, eternal bliss!

Thus ends the eleventh chapter named Viśvarūpa Darśana Yogaḥ of the Upaniṣad of Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of Yoga dealing with the Science of the Absolute, in the form of the dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna.

BhagavadGita

Love Is Your Very Life

CHAPTER 12

In love, life comes to its ultimate peak.
It is only in love that we will find God.



- ◆ *Swamiji*, you mentioned there is no word like divorce in Sanskrit. In the West, it is a reality.
- ◆ I have read and known people who have had near death experiences, out of body experiences. All of them have described them as beautiful. Why do you describe death as painful, like a thousand scorpions biting you?
- ◆ *Swamiji*, Krishna says my devotee never perishes. But if everything is God, what perishes? Krishna makes it sound like his devotee does not perish and others do. Please explain and remove my doubt.
- ◆ If one dies on *mahāśivarātri* or any other auspicious day, does the soul have direct entry into heaven?
- ◆ Dear *Swamiji*, if someone spends his life thinking of money, what kind of life will he have in his next birth, that of a rich man or a poor man?
- ◆ Respected *Swamiji*, I worship the formless form of God. Can I still follow you and become your disciple?
- ◆ What is the meaning of the rebirth of Self-realized saints?
- ◆ Respected *Swamiji*, each day I learn beautiful knowledge, and I am so happy. Then I go back home and feel a little confused, even depressed. What is going on?
- ◆ Dear *Swamiji*, during the great war of Mahabharata everyone was following unlawful methods. Why?
- ◆ How does one let go of attachment? It seems inseparable from living
- ◆ *Swamiji*, if every waking and sleeping is akin to birth and death, and at the time of birth if we create an earthly life, does it mean that each awakening after sleep is an opportunity for a new life in our current form?



Love Is Your Very Life

In the previous chapter, Arjuna asks for and receives the *viśvarūpa darśan*, the vision of the universal form of Krishna. Krishna very patiently resolves Arjuna's doubts and answers all his questions. Arjuna then wishes to see the true reality of Krishna, the form behind the formless, the Imperishable, the Eternal. Krishna obliges his friend and disciple, Arjuna, the true representative of the human being, *nara*.

Seeing this cosmic form of Krishna, and unable to withstand the energy, Arjuna begs Krishna to show him the benevolent four-armed form of Vishnu that he is used to worshipping with devotion. Finally, Krishna reverts to His normal human form as Arjuna's charioteer, and the King of Yadavas. After showing His cosmic form and having given the experience of cosmic consciousness to Arjuna, Krishna now speaks about *bhakti*, devotional love.

Krishna's universal form, as displayed to Arjuna, is His cosmic consciousness, which is our collective consciousness. Arjuna understands from Krishna that he too is a part of this cosmic consciousness, and at the same time he is aware that what he could see of Krishna is a mere fraction of His eternal cosmic Self.

Arjuna's experience of the divine form of Krishna raises further questions in his mind.

Is this form that he just witnessed the glorious reality of the cosmos? Is this the true reality that he should focus on? Or is the formless Self that Krishna had talked to him about earlier more important?

Usually people think a spiritual experience happens only after *bhakti*, devotional love. However, *bhakti* happens only after a spiritual experience. Real *bhakti* cannot happen to you before a spiritual experience.

Western religions believe that social service leads to spiritual experience. No, never! Without our own inner transformation we can never hope to help others. If we do that, whatever we do will only be skin deep, just superficial. We do it to boost our ego, to hear others speak of our kindness and about how good we are.

Only when our ego disappears can we relate to others as part of a collective consciousness. Only in this case, do we feel we are one with everyone else, rich or poor, black or white. Then we can engage in a meaningful contribution to others.

Only when a person experiences every being as part of the cosmic consciousness can he radiate love. Only such a person knows what love is. Nobody else knows what love is. Others *think* that they love, or *act* as if they love. Be very clear, so many people act as if they love. Sometimes by acting, they think that they love. Never can we love by acting!

Love must flow from our being. Love happens when we experience cosmic consciousness, when we have a spiritual experience, when our ego disappears. Krishna lays out the whole technique for us, step-by-step.

After a spiritual experience so much gratitude flows from our being, so much love overflows from our being that we start radiating it. We need not make an effort, it just flows. We cannot stop it. No one can show or experience love unless they have had a spiritual experience.

Unconditional love cannot be forced to happen. It flowers inside us when our mind is silenced and cleansed. What we commonly call love is conditional. We use our love to earn approval from others.

We talk about loving other people. We are proud of loving the whole world. In practice, however, we find it difficult to love even our neighbor, especially if he is wealthier than us. There are times when one would gladly lose one's eye, so that his neighbor may lose both eyes. Such is the negativity arising out of jealousy and greed. How can we love the world when we cannot love our neighbor? How can we talk about doing service to humanity when basic charity to one's kith and kin is not there?

People ask me, '*Swamiji*, you tell your devotees to meditate, meditate, and meditate. What is the use? Isn't it a selfish practice? Why don't you tell them to do service? That will benefit a lot of people.'

There are many so-called spiritual organizations and organized charities that are caught in social service, just for name, fame and social prestige.

The people running these organizations, the people involved in these organizations, are always preoccupied and busy being photographed for newspapers and magazines. Organized charity is a beautiful way of cheating yourself and others. Your ego is fed well when you do charity this way.

Charity can never be organized. It just has to flow. It is not an external expression. It is an internal conviction. The moment we try to organize that conviction, the whole thing takes on a different quality, a different color, and a different purpose. Only when it flows after an experience is it a solid expression of love.

Our inner transformation must happen before we help others transform. Unless we feel that we are part of the Whole, unless we feel that every other person is irretrievably linked to us, it is impossible for us to contribute with true love. We will only be hypocrites.

We are part of the cosmic ocean. Each of us is a mere drop. As long as we remain droplets and do not understand the reality of being part of the same ocean, we remain separate; our feelings will be driven by 'I' and 'mine'. As long as this separation remains, there can be no true love. There can be no expression of unconditional love.

Zen Buddhism beautifully says, 'Whatever Buddha does, whatever an enlightened being does, even if he kills someone, it will only do that person good. It will do Buddha as well as the other person good, because Buddha is driven by cosmic consciousness. Therefore it will always be good for everyone.'

However, whatever an unenlightened man does, even if he does great service, it may or may not do good to him and society. Good or bad is not decided by doing. It is decided by the being!

When an enlightened man acts, even small things lead to great results in the world. When an unenlightened person acts, even great truths may lead to misery and destruction at times.

Think about the simple words uttered by Buddha, 'Watch your breath, witness your inhaling and exhaling.' Buddha discovered this simple truth through which thousands of people have become enlightened. Through this *vipāssana* meditation technique, the lives of thousands have been transformed. As a result, the entire universe has benefited.

When Buddha uttered an ordinary truth, a simple truth, it led and continues to lead thousands of people into a state of higher consciousness. Yet, when an

unenlightened person discovers a great truth, it leads to destruction. For example, the atomic theory is a great truth. The theory of relativity is a great truth. Yet, when it comes from an unenlightened mind, it leads to destruction.

A statistical report in a magazine claims that the governments of all the countries in the world have enough atomic weapons to destroy the planet earth over a thousand times. They have piled up enough atomic weapons to destroy planet earth not once or twice but over a 1000 times! And today there must be twice the power to destroy the world. This is the result of one unenlightened mind.

Researchers are now engaged in scientific work related to cloning and stem cells and so on. Whatever results and benefits humanity may receive from this work will be more dependent upon the quality of the being of the researchers. The effect will not depend on the quality of their minds. Minds are always driven by ego. The being is driven by consciousness and awareness of universal love.

If a single person with the wrong attitude is allowed to sit in a seat of power, he can endanger the whole of humanity. Everything is ready. All we need is someone to press the button. If he is mad enough and sadistic enough to press the button, global homicide will happen. So many atomic weapons have been piled up.

See, atomic fission is a great truth. Atomic fission says that atoms can be split and thereby made to release massive amounts of energy. It is such a great truth, yet it is an expression of an unenlightened mind. It can be put to many constructive uses. This truth can change the world for the better. However, as long as it is evolved from and operated by unenlightened beings, rooted in their ego, it will naturally lead to destruction.

Deeds or words by themselves don't do good or bad. They do good or bad based upon the consciousness from which they are emitted; based upon the consciousness from which they are expressed. This consciousness, this awareness is related to the feeling one has for others. The quality of our awareness decides whether the end result benefits or destroys humanity.

Only after a spiritual experience do we feel gratitude at the being level. If it is our solid experience that every living being is God, we radiate love and our being becomes love. *Bhakti* and love are expressions that flow from that spiritual experience.

Krishna's discourse on *Bhakti Yoga* starts after *Viśvarūpa Darśana Yoga*. After the experience, He talks about the expression, *Bhakti Yoga*. He talks about the expression of devotional love.



Who Is Perfect?

2.1 Arjuna asks, 'Who are considered perfect, those who are always engaged sincerely in Your worship in form or those who worship the imperishable, the invisible formless You?'

Arjuna now speaks in a totally different manner. The trend is different now. He asks, 'Which of these two types of people are considered to be better: those who are always engaged in your *bhakti*, devotional love towards you or those who merge in the *Brahman*, the unmanifest, formless, cosmic consciousness?'

Please be clear, Arjuna is not asking for himself. From here, the discourse becomes a simple discussion. It is more like trying to record the truth for future generations.

The questions from here onward are neither doubts nor enquiries. Arjuna tries to put the whole thing down in the expression form, so that it will be a useful reference for future generations. A flow of Arjuna's love for humanity, an expression of his divine experience, prompts him to seek answers to these vexing questions and record the answers from the godhead Himself.

Arjuna asks, 'Who will be established in You totally? Will it be a devotee or a person who is enlightened?'

Religious people, or so-called religious people, confuse others with this verse about Arjuna's question as to whether worshipping the form or worshipping the formless is right. These people are so confused that they do not know right from wrong. They use their intellectual arrogance and misunderstanding to confuse others. Let me tell you, this is not what Arjuna meant by asking this question. If we look at Krishna's answers, we will understand.

Arjuna asks, 'Is it good to be established in the experience of the divine consciousness, just to stay in it and enjoy the eternal bliss that flows from that experience? Or is it better to express that love and gratitude created by the conscious experience towards the whole world and every living being? Which is correct? Which one is preferred?'

See, when we have a spiritual experience, some people stay in that experience with closed eyes, that's all. Only with eyes closed, they can see God. They do not wish to open their eyes. They do not seek to use their senses, since the bliss within is so great and beautiful that absolutely no sensory input remotely matches that bliss.

However, there are others who are impelled to open their eyes, as it were, by the universe to communicate that blissful experience through their expression to others.

The so-called scholars enter into endless debates on *savikalpa samādhi* and *nirvikalpa samādhi*. *Savikalpa samādhi* is the state where the experience of *samādhi* continues. *Nirvikalpa samādhi* is when the expression of *samādhi* starts. *Savikalpa samādhi* is supposed to be a lower state, and one is supposed to work towards the second and higher state of *nirvikalpa samādhi*. But it is not an ironclad rule.

In my case, both happened together. I did not go through two stages. I went through just one and reached the state where the experience was allowed to be expressed. It was the will of the Divine, *Parāśakti*. Please understand that this is not a choice that people make. An option is not presented to those who have such experiences.

Ordinary human beings have freewill to decide what they wish to do and their *karma* follows. *Karma* refers to the fruits of their own actions, good or bad. Those who experience the Divine transcend that point of freewill. They are driven wholly, in each step that they take, by *Parāśakti*, the universal energy; by Krishna, the superconscious Godhead. They have no choice whether to sit with their eyes closed or open their eyes and benefit humanity.

It is not that Arjuna does not know this. Arjuna understands that he and others who have had an experience of the Divine, face the choicelessness. He knows that Krishna decides what he should do. Yet, he asks because he wants everyone to understand. This is why the Bhagavad Gita is a living scripture. Its words resonate 5,000 or 10,000 years after Krishna spoke. This dialogue answers every possible question of a seeker. Arjuna's role is to represent the spiritual seeker.

Arjuna asks, 'What type of a person is greater? Is it a person who closes his eyes and sees God within himself or a person who opens his eyes and sees God in every being? Who is greater?'

Please understand, he is not asking whether worshiping the form or worshiping the formless is greater. Yet so-called religious people have interpreted it that way, and created problems between the teachings of the great masters Adi Shankaracharya and Ramanuja.

Shankara followed *jñāna*, the path of knowledge, and Ramanuja followed *bhakti*, the path of devotion. *Jñāna* focuses on the formless through intellectual queries. *Bhakti* focuses on the form, sheer devotion, as if the Divine were alive and kicking, as It indeed is! However, those who have studied Shankara and Ramanuja in depth know that there was much devotion in Shankara's approach and much knowledge in Ramanuja's approach! Both approaches converge. One without the other never works.

No one who has read Shankara's Soundarya Lahiri will be unmoved by the expression of love of this master for the Mother goddess. It is true, that there is tremendous metaphoric significance in philosophical terms to this work and other devotional works of Shankara. Still he is moved primarily by his devotion to the form that he describes so beautifully.

He describes the goddess from head to toe as he sees Her in front of him. It is a graphic, loving description, an aware and devotional rendering of his expression.

On the other side, the depth of philosophical wisdom and insight provided by Ramanuja in his commentaries, easily rivals that of Shankara, who is considered the pinnacle of religious philosophy. True knowledge cannot exist without devotion and true devotion cannot exist without knowledge.

The argument goes on and on and on. But if we see the answers, it is clear that this is not what Arjuna asks. He asks, whether he should be established in that divine experience or whether he should express the gratitude happening within him?

Expressing the gratitude that happens because of the experience is devotion. Having that experience and rejoicing, staying in that experience is knowledge; that's all.

Krishna's answer is that both paths are the same. The paths are intertwined. The first one leads to the second one and the second one leads back to first one. We

have heard the term vicious circle. First one leads to the second and the second one leads back to the first one.

Now I want to introduce another word, 'virtuous circle.' Vicious circle leads to low energy or lower level of consciousness. Virtuous circle leads to high energy, a higher level of consciousness! Bliss leading to devotion and gratitude, devotion and gratitude leading to bliss: these two form the virtuous circle that lead us to higher consciousness.

Bliss means the experience that leads us to the expression of gratitude and service. Again, the expression, the gratitude of service, leads us to bliss. One leads to the other and therefore it is a *virtuous* circle. Usually we are caught in the vicious circle. Fear leads to greed and greed leads to fear. More fear leads to more greed, and more greed leads to more fear. This is the vicious circle. Here Krishna introduces the *virtuous* circle. *Virtuous circle* is what He calls *dharma*, righteousness, that which must be followed in the path of truth.

Dharma means *virtuous circle*, that which leads us to live and express higher and higher levels of consciousness. That in turn leads us to higher and higher levels of blissful experience. Consciousness and bliss lead to expression of that consciousness and bliss, which in turn lead to higher level experiences.

Q: Swamiji, you mentioned there is no word like divorce in Sanskrit. In the West, it is a reality.

If you are spiritual, there is no need for divorce. If you need a divorce, there is something seriously wrong. Understand that real spirituality makes you a better husband or a better wife. Don't complain saying, 'No, he is not spiritual. He is not falling in tune with me.' These negative feelings and expressions arise because of your expectations.

Based on our *samskāras* (our engraved memories from the past), and what we see around us, each of us develops a template, an image, of what we wish to see in our life mate or soul mate. This search for the partner is genetic and programmed by nature, to ensure the continuation of the human species.

But invariably, what we see is not what we get. We see a rosy picture and fall in love. Understand, we never say that we 'rise' in love. We always only 'fall' in love. When we get closer to each other, the time span of contact increases and the

space between the two decreases, the colors change from rose to yellow. That is what marriage is about.

A man presented a newly married couple a puppy as a wedding gift. After six months he met the husband and asked how he and his wife were getting along. The husband said, 'In the beginning, the puppy barked and my wife brought me the morning newspaper. Now the puppy brings in the newspaper and my wife barks!'

We are full of expectations, so full of fantasies. We cannot let go and appreciate the other person for what he or she is. Understand that God created all of us. Are we trying to make the other person better than what God created that person to be? Yet, we take a brush and paint and try to repaint that person to match our color scheme. Or we take a hammer and chisel and sculpt that person to our desired form. What will happen if we chisel living human beings? Only suffering will follow.

In the Shiva Sutras, an ancient Hindu scripture delivered by Lord Shiva to His consort Devi Parvati, She asks Shiva, 'Lord, what makes a happy couple?'

The great master says, 'In every marriage there are four people. Each marital bed has four people, not two: the man, the woman, the man's fantasy of his woman and the woman's fantasy of her man! When the man and woman drop their fantasies and there are only the two of them in bed, marriage becomes happy!'

Let me tell you honestly: We see what we project. Just look inside, and you will understand that we contribute to every problem. Nobody can hurt us without our permission. Nobody can disturb us without our permission. Nobody can possess us without our permission.

We must have some vested interest. That is why we allow this type of person into our life. Allowing and attracting persons who are not in tune with us is not spiritual. That means there is something wrong in our being. Search, work on it, heal it. Everything will clear.



Fix Your Mind on Me

12.2 Lord Krishna said, 'Those who fix their mind on Me eternally and those who are steadfast in worshipping Me with supreme faith, I consider them to be perfect in yoga, ready to be united with Me.'

Bhagavān says, 'Those who are established in their consciousness that expresses devotional gratitude, *bhakti*, are always engaged in Me. Those who focus on the transcendental faith, meaning the experience that they undergo at the time of cosmic experience, they are engaged in Me. Both are ultimate. Both are united in Me.

Sanskrit is a beautiful language. We can make any meaning out of any word. That is why thousands of commentaries on the Gita are possible, yet the Gita is still new. No book has been commented upon by so many masters, as much as the Gita has been. Each master gives his own meaning.

Again, I insist that if a person who has not had a spiritual experience starts expressing and lecturing, he will naturally be in trouble and create trouble for others as well. In the same way that the blind leads the blind, both end up in trouble. A person without any spiritual experience, when he translates or talks, he automatically does only 'text torturing.'

Only a person who has had a true spiritual experience and one who is free from inner chatter is true to himself and others. Only then can a person transparently and honestly expose himself to others without thinking what they might say of him. Until then, there is inner chatter and an effort to filter within him. There is an effort to rehearse. We dare not bare the truth of the inner chatter to the outside world. We fear that what may spill out will be unacceptable, so we filter and replace what we feel inside us with lies that will be sociably acceptable. We make our lives into lies.

Understand this small example: Let us say I draw a diagram and explain the concept of an experience that I have had to you. After a few days, you present only an audio CD of this session to a friend who did not attend this lecture. You have not had the experience. You are merely translating my experience. How much can you explain? How well will you be able to explain? How much can the other person grasp? He will not be able to grasp much. He will miss many details that are in the diagram. He will miss my body language completely. You cannot explain accurately either, because you are not the one who had the experience.

I am explaining through a picture. If you are here, seeing and listening to me, you will understand. Even then, it is difficult to grasp the truth, to understand it. So if you just give the audio CD to a friend, who has not attended the program, how much will he understand? In the same way, if he tries to understand through the CD and gives a lecture on this subject to someone else, how much of it will be accurate?

A person who has not attended the lecture, who just has the audio recording or a copy of the book, cannot understand much. Like that, the Bhagavad Gita is a transcription of the audio recording. If the Gita were an audio recording, at least you would comprehend a bit more from the voice modulation. However, the voice modulation is not there. It is a transcription of an audio recording. How much can you translate or interpret?

That is why Vivekananda emphasized, again and again, not to read or listen to anything expressed by a person who has not personally experienced the truth. Most importantly, he said, 'Bother about who is speaking, rather than what he is speaking.' He emphasized the personal experience. He added, 'All the books in the libraries in this world cannot lead you to the truth. Once you have realized the truth, you do not need books.'

Intellectual understanding is not experiencing. Understanding is a phenomenon of the mind. It is a byproduct of our ego. The filters of our mind and ego color our understanding.

Experience is the truth felt by the being. Spiritual experience transcends mind and ego. It is pure, uncolored and permanent. By expressing an understanding of someone's experience, one may express a fact or an opinion at best, but never the truth. Truth must be experienced to be expressed.

Here *Bhagavān* says,

*mayyāveśya mano ye mām
nitya yuktā upāsate
śraddhayā parayopetās
te me yuktatamā matāḥ*

Those who express their experience as devotion, see the world (*upāsate*). The word *upassana* can be translated in many ways. When we see the the Divine in everybody, when we express the truth of the spiritual experience, whatever we do is *upassana*. Please be very clear, when we can't see the Divine in people around us, we can't see the Divine in any statue or any master either. If we don't see the Divine in living beings, we cannot see the Divine in a God or a guru.

If it were not for the great master Ramanuja, South India would have completely lost its spirituality. Shankara settled in the north even though he was born and brought up in the south. He spent most of his time in North India. Because of Ramanuja, devotion and spirituality thrived in South India. Until his end, Ramanuja stayed in South India. Not only that, Shankara lived only until the age of thirty-two. Ramanuja lived on planet earth for a long time and inspired thousands of people in the path of spirituality and meditation.

One young man asks Ramanuja, 'Master, please tell me how I can achieve *bhakti*, achieve God, achieve devotion?' Ramanuja asks, 'Have you ever loved anybody in your life?' This man was shaken. He said, 'I am a pure *brahmachāri*, a celibate. How can you ask me this question? I came to learn about God and you ask me this question?' Ramanuja says, 'First go and love somebody. See how you feel when you love somebody. Then come back and I will teach you about God. I will teach you about *bhakti*, devotional love.'

This man was naturally taken aback. He could not understand Ramanuja. Understand, unless we love the person whom we can see, how will we love an entity that we have never seen? If we can't love human beings whom we see everyday, how can we love the form of God whom we have never seen? What Ramanuja says is true. We should also understand that unless we radiate love in the space where we stay, we can't love the whole world.

Again and again I tell people, loving the whole world is easy. Loving your wife is difficult. Loving the whole world is easy because we don't need to do anything to substantiate it! All we must do is to say, 'I love the whole world, and I love the whole world.' But when we love our wife, we must change our attitude. We must change our mind. And we must change our words. We must do something. There starts the problem!

To truly love someone whom we spend our life with, to prevent familiarity from breeding contempt, we need to drop our 'I' and 'mine'. As long as we consider our spouse as a possession, what arises in our mind and heart is violence, not love. We will feel we must control the other being and we will feel we must prove that we are the owner. To even comprehend the meaning of true love, we need to drop the feeling that we possess.

The Lebanese philosopher and poet Khalil Gibran speaks on love in his celebrated book *The Prophet*: share your bread with your beloved, but do not eat from the same loaf. Share what you drink with your beloved, but do not drink from the same cup. You do not own one another.

What many of us say to our spouse and feel we have the right to say is often what we would not dare to say to a stranger. We would be highly offended if we were told we have no right to behave like that to our spouse. We feel that social courtesies do not apply to spouses because we feel that we love them. Today's children do not put up with the kind of words spouses routinely use on each other.

How many of you can say with your hand on your heart that even 50% of the time, what you say to your spouse springs from true unconditional love? Understand, it is only when you love your wife that you can begin to comprehend how to love the world. That is the entire purpose of marriage rituals and why that relationship is considered sacred. By developing that bond, that love between two people who are united for the rest of their lives, it is possible to develop that experience, which is the truth, which in turn leads to the expression of that same truth as love to the rest of humanity.

Being established in that consciousness or expressing it towards the universe is the same. When a person is merged, when a person is established, he automatically radiates. If the love is not happening, if the expression is not happening, the person has not experienced. When the real experience happens, it automatically expresses. Experience is not something we can possess and keep in our cupboard. No! Experience will possess us and it will radiate through us.

A disciple asked a Zen master, 'Will an enlightened master speak?' The master said, 'No, an enlightened person never speaks. Only a person who doesn't know speaks.' Then the disciple asked, 'Will an enlightened master keep quiet?' The master said, 'No, an enlightened master never keeps quiet. If he keeps quiet, then he is not enlightened.' The disciple was puzzled, 'You say he neither speaks nor keeps quiet. What does he do?' The master replied,

‘He sings. His being sings. He neither speaks, nor keeps quiet. His very being sings.’

This is because we cannot possess an experience. Only the experience can possess us. When experiences possess us, whatever we do will be a song. Any word that comes out will be a song. Our being will be so light. We will simply float. Our walking will be a dance. Our body language will radiate grace. All our expressions will be a great service to humanity.

The Zen master says beautifully that an enlightened man never keeps quiet nor does he talk, he just sings. That is why the Gita is given in the form of a song. The Gita is not prose. It is poetry. Great truths can never be expressed in logic. They can only be expressed through poetry. Prose is logic. It is bound. It is rigid. But poetry is emotion. It is love and it flows.

Krishna says that a person established in the consciousness is great; however, the person who expresses, who shares, who automatically radiates is as great as the one who is established. The truth is that if a man is established in consciousness, he will radiate and he will sing.

Let me tell a small story of a great devotee, a *bhakta*, who lived in Varanasi.

This man was a great devotee of Krishna. He owned a small copy of the Bhagavad Gita. That was his entire possession, his only wealth. Every morning he bathed in the sacred river Ganga while reciting the Bhagavad Gita with devotion. He spent the whole day sitting and meditating on Krishna. He was continuously in the ecstasy of Krishna. He radiated Krishna *bhakti*, devotional love towards Krishna.

Of course, we see these types of souls only in India. Society does not disturb people who just sit in ecstasy. Society takes care of them. In any other country such people would be called homeless, hounded by police and the public, put in a shelter and disrespected. Indian culture is beautiful. If we sit in ecstasy, we are respected and worshipped!

This person was in ecstasy, always singing Krishna’s name, in Krishna *dhyāna*, in Krishna meditation, in Krishna *smaraṇa*, repeating Krishna’s name. He was lost in Krishna consciousness. One day a beggar came and asked, ‘Oh Swami, please give me something. For the last three days I have not eaten.’ Now this posed a big problem to the *bhakta*. He himself was a beggar and had only one possession, the Gita. He owned nothing else. If someone gave him food, he ate. Otherwise, he just sang Krishna’s name. His only property was the Gita.

When this beggar asked for food after not having eaten for three days, he felt bad. He looked to see if there was something to give. There was only the Bhagavad Gita, which he had preserved and worshipped for many years. That was his sole possession, akin to God for him. It was everything to him.

Suddenly, he gathered courage and took hold of the book and said, 'I have nothing. I have only this book. However, if you go to the city and tell people that this book was my possession, you will be able to auction it. Surely someone will buy it. Many people respect me. To some extent, they feel devoted to me. So Krishna's blessing is there. Go to the market and auction this book. Take the money and eat and fulfill yourself and be happy.'

The beggar took the book and went away. The next morning, when he was about to chant the Gita, the *bhakta* said, 'Oh Krishna, I have given away your words to keep your words. What is your word? Your word is to radiate *bhakti*, to radiate devotion, and to radiate service. I gave away your word to keep your word.'

This man was a true devotee. He had seen the truth. He had experienced it. So he was able to express it. He translated his devotion to Krishna as love and service to his fellow men. Keeping Krishna's word was more important than keeping Krishna's book. Actually, if we use His words properly, we will have the experience. We will radiate His words.

Q: I have read and known people who have had near death experiences, out of body experiences. All of them have described them as beautiful. Why do you describe death as painful, like a thousand scorpions biting you?

Please understand, I was talking about a normal man's death experience. Here you say, 'I have read and I know people who have had near death experiences.' The moment you say I have read, it means you have read about their experiences. You have heard from them, meaning that they are, in some way or the other, meditators or spiritual people. That's why they have had the experience and have come back.

I was explaining about leaving once and for all. You are speaking about having an experience and coming back. Having an experience and coming back means the experience is spiritual. It is not a death experience. I was talking about actual physical death, not conscious transformation.

Ramana Maharshi, the great saint, experienced a conscious experience of death. But I was describing the actual death of a normal human being, the physical death of a normal human being. Understand the difference.

In my experience of the truth, at the time of death the spirit passes through seven layers of energy. The entire life that one has lived is played back, with no details omitted. The being relives the pains, pleasures, guilts, desires and all such emotions that it experienced when it was alive. That is how you pass through hell and heaven. The pain of that process is like a thousand scorpions stinging, all at the same time. It is like the body being ripped open from head to toe. The only way to escape this pain is to have a glimpse of truth, at least once in one's life. That is possible only through meditation.

In the Nithyananda Spurana Program (NSP), that is what I do. I take you through the journey that your spirit will pass through at the time of death and make you meditate upon your *samskāras* at each stage in order to dissolve them. This opens the possibility of painless death and no rebirth.



They Too Attain Me

12.3,4 But those who worship with awareness the imperishable, the unmanifest, that which lies beyond the perception of senses, the all pervading, inconceivable, unchanging, the non-moving and permanent; those who worship by restraining their senses, and are working with even mind for the benefit of mankind, they too attain Me.

Krishna is *saguṇa brahman*, the physical cosmos, who showed Himself in this form to Arjuna, in His *viśvarūpa* - cosmic form. Krishna is *nirguṇa brahman* as well, the formless consciousness. In both the form and the formless, He is Krishna, the divine consciousness who has all the attributes that He talks about here.

The Divine is imperishable. It is *akṣaram*. Everything else in this material universe may come and go, appear and disappear, while the Divine remains forever. It is unique and incomparable and cannot be benchmarked against anything, as it is supreme. It is unmanifest and intangible, and therefore cannot be comprehended by the senses. It cannot be grasped by thoughts and mind, which is why one's mind-body needs to be transcended to glimpse the Divine. The Divine resides everywhere and is omnipresent.

When King Hiranyakasipu, the demonic father of Prahlad, the young prince and great devotee of Vishnu, dares his son to utter the name of Narayana whom he hates, Prahlad says, 'Narayana is everywhere. He is in this twig and He is in this pillar.'

Meanwhile in Narayana's heavenly abode, Narayana jumps up in a hurry from his dalliance. Disturbed by his abrupt movement, his consort Lakshmi complains, as every wife would, 'Where are you going at this time of the night?' Vishnu responds, 'My devotee Prahlad is about to call me. I do not know whether he will

point his finger to a twig or a pillar. Wherever he points, I must be ready to appear. I cannot let him down!’

The true devotee sees his Lord everywhere. Ramakrishna describes the love of a true devotee this way: ‘It is the love of a chaste wife for her husband, the attachment of a miser towards his hoarded wealth, the craving of a worldly person for sensual pleasures, all rolled into one and directed towards the Lord, creating devotion.’

The true devotee who follows either path with awareness, with his senses focused on the Lord, experiences Him and also experiences the bliss of serving humanity. The devotee sees the Lord in everyone he meets. His experience of His Lord becomes his expression of love to all.

Krishna’s beloved Radha tells the *gopikās* (women cowherds who were around Krishna all the time), ‘I don’t know what has happened. I don’t know what has come over me. I see Krishna in everybody. I feel that everybody is Krishna. I don’t know what is happening.’ One of the *gopikās* answers, ‘You have devotion as the very black eye liner in your eyes!’

It is like this: When you wear dark glasses everything appears dark; when you wear green-tinted glasses, everything appears green. In the same way, when you have devotion as your very eye liner, whomsoever you see appears as Krishna, appears divine! Here, Krishna says, the person established in superconsciousness and the person who radiates devotion are the same. They are not two different groups.

Krishna does not create two groups. Arjuna presents two groups as the reality that he sees: those who are established and those who are radiating. Krishna says both are the same. He does not divide them into two groups, those who are established and those who radiate. Krishna says, a person who is established always radiates and the person who radiates is always established. As I said earlier, it is a *virtuous* circle.

Ramakrishna says, ‘When a bell rings, each stroke has a sound form of its own. But even when the bell stops ringing, we continue to hear the sound. That’s how God appears, both as form and as formless.’

In his verses of Bhaja Govindam, Shankara says,

*guru caraṇāmbuja nirbhara bhaktaḥ
saṁsārāt acirāt bhava muktaḥ
sendriya mānasa niyamāt evam
drakṣyasi nija hridayatvam devam*

One who controls his senses, focuses his mind and surrenders completely to his master sees the Lord in his heart. Once again, Krishna makes the point here. When one has realized the formless nature of the Divine, its imperishability and its unmanifest nature with controlled senses, one works for the good of mankind.

Once the experience of the formless divine happens, it is no different from the experience of the form. Both lead to the truth that one is a part of collective consciousness. The expression of this realization is one of deep humility and compassion. It is manifested as deep gratitude and surrender. One learns to flow with the energy of this universe. One no longer struggles against the currents of life.

The Chinese philosophy of Tao talks about flowing. The reed that bends in the flowing water survives and flourishes. The sapling that is too rigid to bend disappears. If we are like the reed, in complete surrender to what is around us, accepting things as they are, not struggling every moment to fight against nature, we remain blissful.

When we are full of ego we tend to control. We believe we can bring order to an otherwise chaotic world. It takes only a moment to realize that this entire universe and planet earth function not because of us, but in spite of us. Millions and millions of stars and planets in this universe function in apparent chaos. But understand, the universe is always in order.

We want to be in order but we are truly chaotic. Only when we surrender to the will of the universe, we fall into the cosmic order. Things go well for us. When we give up wanting, we get what we want. When we get what we truly want, it benefits mankind. Because when we surrender, Krishna takes care.

Q: Swamiji, Krishna says my devotee never perishes. But if everything is God, what perishes? Krishna makes it sound like his devotee does not perish and others do. Please explain and remove my doubt.

Understand, the moment you realize that you do not perish, you become a devotee of Krishna. There are no categories like Krishna's devotees and others, or that Krishna's devotees will not perish while others will. Whosoever understands that he will not perish, automatically becomes Krishna's devotee. The moment you understand this concept you become His devotee. If you understand that everything is God, you understand that nothing perishes.

He says, 'My devotee never perishes.' This is a relative statement. If you understand everything is God, then nothing perishes. When you understand that, if you reach that level, this statement will not make sense to you. This statement is for a normal person who is on the path, who is still attempting to understand it. Firstly, if you have experienced that everything is God, you don't need to bother about this statement.

Next, the moment you understand nothing perishes, you become a 'Krishna devotee'. So Krishna is not making partial statements. He does not show favoritism and say, 'Only My devotees will not perish and others' devotees will perish.'

He doesn't mean it that way. Whoever understands this philosophy will not perish. That is what it means. Whoever understands this science will not perish. If you understand the science and even if you are not devoted to the flute and the peacock feather, you will not perish. So don't bother. If you think that Krishna means only the flute and peacock feather, then this question is raised. If you understand that Krishna is beyond the flute and peacock feather, you will not have this doubt. 'My devotee never perishes. When he understands this, he never perishes,' that is what Krishna means.

Krishna is not the Krishna whom you think He is. He is not the single form you are used to. He is the superconscious energy, the cosmic energy, *Parāśakti*.

A group of Krishna devotees (or more like fanatics), attended my discourse and asked me, 'You speak on the Gita so elaborately. Do you believe in Krishna?' I said, 'Of course, I do.' They asked, 'If you do, then how can you talk about other gods as divine? We are told that you have a Dakshinamurti temple in your ashram. How can you do that? Krishna says in the Gita that He is everything.'

I explained to them, in the Mahabharata, after the war, Arjuna and Krishna go for a walk. Arjuna turns to Krishna and says, 'I do not remember much of what you told me before the war started, on the battlefield. Can you please tell me again?' Krishna smiles and says, 'Oh! You forgot? I have also forgotten.' Arjuna is

bewildered and asks, 'Krishna, how is that possible?' Krishna replies, 'When I was teaching on the battlefield, I was the superconscious, *Parabrahma* Krishna. Now, I am only Vasudeva Krishna. I cannot remember what I told you in my formless universal energy mode.' But compassionate as He was, Krishna did explain once again the truth to Arjuna in what is known as the Anu Gita.

When the Krishna devotees understood this principle of the divine consciousness of Krishna being the same as every other form of divinity, however much the forms may differ in the way we worship, they were satisfied. The Krishna who says, 'My devotee shall never perish' is *Parabrahma* Krishna. In that state, He resides in each of us. If we realize that truth, we become His devotee; we too become Krishna, one with Krishna consciousness; never to perish.



Formless Is Difficult

12.5 For those whose minds are set on the unmanifest, the formless, it is more difficult to advance; attaining the formless unmanifest is difficult for the embodied.

Krishna says here what many of us know to be true. He says, intellectuals find it more difficult to comprehend the Divine.

Brahma and Vishnu had an argument as to who was greater. They could not agree and so they went to Shiva for mediation. Shiva took the form of an infinite shaft of light that spanned the universe and said to them, 'The one who finds either of my two ends is greater.'

Vishnu assumed the form of a boar and dug through the earth searching for the lower end of the light shaft. Brahma flew up as a swan to reach the upper end. After a considerably long time, Vishnu realized that he was getting nowhere. He realised his foolishness in trying to find Shiva's beginning and returned and sought Shiva's forgiveness for attempting to look for His beginning.

Brahma continued regardless. On his way up, he found a flower floating down. The flower said that it was falling from Shiva's head and it had been falling for many lifetimes of Brahma. Startled, Brahma realized there was no way he would reach the end of the shaft. He forced the flower to go with him to Shiva and support his claim that he, Brahma, had picked the flower from Shiva's locks. The flower agreed after some hesitation and went with Brahma to Shiva. Brahma told Shiva that he had seen his head and that the flower was a witness. The flower silently nodded its head. Hearing Brahma's lie, Shiva became furious and cut off one of Brahma's heads and forbade him from being worshipped. He also cursed the flower, saying that it would never be used in His worship.

There is metaphoric meaning to this legend. Vishnu represents wealth and Brahma represents intellect. One who has wealth finds it difficult to reach God, no doubt, but at some point in time, he may understand and have the humility to accept that wealth is of no use in the ultimate sense and therefore drop his attachment to wealth and surrender to the truth. This is symbolised by Vishnu coming back to Shiva and asking for forgiveness. However, an intellectual person finds it impossible to shed his ego in his search for the truth. Therefore he never finds it. But the intellect will always try cunning methods to make us believe that we have found the truth. This is symbolised by Brahma taking the flower as false witness to Shiva to say that he had found his head.

In one's search for the truth, the Divine, the unmanifest, which is what the intellectual seeker is focusing on, the intellect, the mind or ego will be the block that makes the path difficult to traverse.

The individual human being carries not only the body but the mind as well. And with the mind, it carries the ego. Unless the mind-body is transcended, spiritual advancement is difficult, as Krishna points out.

Shedding the ego is the most difficult thing for the mind-body system. Ego provides the mind-body with its identity, with its existence. The French philosopher Rene Descartes' famous quote, 'I think, therefore I am' is an example of this identification with the intellect.

Whether now or in Krishna's time, the world revolved around the power of thought, the power that seems to provide knowledge and skills. It was essential for one's recognition and status in life. Ramakrishna Paramahansa was an incarnation. Yet, in utter humility, he accepted three people in his life as his masters. The truth though, was that Ramakrishna was the means for their liberation by helping them shed their egos!

One lady Bhairavi Brahmani offered to teach Ramakrishna *tantric* techniques and stayed as a disciple. It took years before she could shed her ego. Only with Ramakrishna's help did she achieve it.

Totapuri, the great *advaitic* (concept of non-duality) scholar had never stayed in one place for more than three nights. He wanted to teach Ramakrishna the non-dual nature of Existence. Ramakrishna left saying he had to ask the Mother. A surprised Totapuri followed him and found him conversing with the idol of Mother Kali whom he had referred to as Mother.

When Totapuri forced him to meditate upon the formless, Ramakrishna objected saying he could not let Mother go. He had always meditated upon Her form. Furious, Totapuri placed a shard of broken glass between Ramakrishna's eyebrows, on his third eye point, and commanded him to cut his Mother Kali into pieces. Ramakrishna went into *samādhi* for three weeks. Rarely has anyone survived that long in *samādhi* and returned. After Ramakrishna returned to body-mind consciousness, Totapuri stayed on for many more months.

Then there was Jatadhari, a devotee of Vishnu who came to Ramakrishna with Ramlala, an idol of Lord Rama in the form of a child. To Jatadhari, this idol of child Rama was a living being. He bathed, fed and talked to Ramlala everyday, all the time. After a few days of staying with Ramakrishna, Jatadhari found that Ramlala started spending more time with Ramakrishna. He would come searching, disturbed that his darling Ramlala had now decided to play with another person.

Jatadhari stayed at Dakshineswar for a long time because he knew Ramlala wanted to be with Ramakrishna. One day, finally, Jatadhari came to bid goodbye to Ramakrishna and said, 'Ramlala said that he wants to be with you. He loves you. I am fulfilled that he has at last revealed Himself to me because of you. I am happy to leave Him with you and go away. I am full of bliss.' Then on, Ramlala stayed with Ramakrishna.

It took the no-mind simplicity of a great master to provide guidance to the learned scholars and to teach them to drop their egos. Dropping the ego is the most difficult thing for the body-mind, especially for one who is focused on the intellect.

Q: Respected Swamiji, will you be conducting a retreat on meditation, in Los Angeles in the near future, during your current visit?

I think I will be conducting one meditation camp called the Arogya Spurana Program, after the *Gītā Jñāna Yajñya*. This program is also called the *Health and Wellness Program*. It is about health and directing your body, mind and spirit towards holistic health, healing your body, mind and spirit.

According to me, health and spirituality are the same. When you become spiritual, you radiate a special kind of health, which is beyond the body. The body itself is disease. Disease does not attack the body. Body itself is a disease! So

according to me, when you experience boundaryless freedom, only then are you really healthy.

This two-day camp is directed towards achieving boundaryless consciousness, towards boundaryless freedom. Naturally, this heals your body also. The Life Bliss Program will also be conducted by our ordained teachers in the ashram. I may join a couple of sessions during the day. I shall be completely conducting the Arogya Spurana program. I am not doing Nithyananda Spurana programs in America, but I am doing one in Vancouver.

I am conducting intense classes for our *ashramites*. All *ashramites* have regular classes and any healer can participate in these too. If you are an initiated healer, you can participate in these classes. I also conduct classes at night after the *Gita jñāna yagna* every evening. The morning class is for everybody, but the evening class is for healers, since the meditations will be higher level and deeper techniques. As I am spending time with the *ashramites* during this visit, I will not conduct any programs other than the Arogya Spurana program.



Freedom From Birth And Death

12.6,7 But those who worship me with single-minded devotion, renouncing all activities unto Me, regarding Me as their supreme goal, whose minds are set in Me, I shall deliver them soon from the ocean of the birth and death cycle.

Krishna makes a promise here. Krishna says unequivocally, 'I shall deliver them from their material existence, the ocean of *saṁsāra*, the cycle of life and death. All that the Lord asks is that the devotee be devoted to Him.

Krishna says, 'If you surrender to Me, surrender all your actions and the fruits of those actions to Me, do my service, meditate upon Me, remain single-minded upon My consciousness, I shall then redeem you, provide you salvation and liberate you. I shall make sure you never need to be born again.' It is the roar of a lion. It is the roar of the King of this universe. 'Surrender to Me and I shall redeem you. Serve Me and I shall liberate you.'

A small story:

There was once a man who was flying to a foreign country. Midway on the flight, the pilot announced, 'We are in deep trouble. Now, only God can save us. All of you may start praying.'

One passenger did not understand what the pilot said and asked his co-passenger about it. The man replied, 'He says there is no hope.'

All our belief in God is skin deep. First of all, to most of us, God is only a concept and we worship that concept. Most of the time, we beg of that concept. We pray, 'Give me this O Lord, give me that O Lord.' When we have one prayer answered, we begin the next. As long as God answers our prayers, as long as the master provides us with what we ask for, our faith in Him lasts. The moment the

prayer goes unanswered, our faith dissolves. We move on to another God or master. We say, 'Is there anyone else out there who can give me the answer I want?'

We do not realize that often God does not answer our prayers out of sheer compassion, out of sheer love for us. In our ignorant state, we keep asking, we keep begging without a break. We do not fully understand the implications of what will happen if our prayers get answered, whether our situation would become better or worse. That is why they say, 'Be careful of what you ask for, you may get it!'

From time to time, God in His infinite wisdom turns down our requests such as wanting to become rich, wanting to be well, wanting to have children, and so on. We then move away from Him. Surrendering to the Divine is not conditional. It must be total. There can be no 'ifs', 'ands', or 'buts'. It cannot be, 'If you grant my prayers, I shall be devoted to you.' That is business. Most of our relationship with God is business.

There are three kinds of surrender. First, there is surrender of one's intellect. For many, this is possible. Once we understand that there is a universal energy far greater than us, most of us can accept and surrender intellectually to that supreme power. At least we can say, 'I surrender.' That's how many of us prostrate in a temple or before a master. The entire body touches the ground signifying our surrender. For that moment, our ego takes a vacation.

Surrender at the next level is emotional. One can melt at the thought of God or master. There is love, there is gratitude pouring out of our hearts and we feel tears streaming down. We become *bhaktas*, devotees. Ramakrishna said, 'If you have tears in your eyes when you think of God or your master, be very clear, this is your last birth! You are ready for liberation.' We are ready but not liberated until we reach the last and third step. This step of surrender is the surrender of one's senses. Our surrender is total at this stage: unconditional, spontaneous, instant and natural.

Krishna says, 'When you surrender to Me, I shall liberate you.' To reach Him, we must surrender totally. Our senses must be surrendered to Him. Our entire consciousness, our complete awareness must only be of Him and nothing else. Nothing else needs to be done. The technique is so simple. 'Surrender and I shall save you,' says the master. 'I shall save you without delay, immediately.' But we query, 'Is there someone else out there to help me?'

The Lord has made it so simple. Yet, we find it so difficult to believe Him.

Q: Please explain how we can completely drop our *saṁskāras* (engraved memories) and everything else and surrender?

You ask how to drop your *saṁskāras*, how to drop everything and surrender. Come for the discourse tomorrow and day after tomorrow and I will tell you. The lectures over the next two days are about *saṁskāras*. We will work in a deep way on every *saṁskāra* within you. The desire *saṁskāra*, the guilt *saṁskāra*, the pain *saṁskāra*... we will work on every *saṁskāra* separately.

Not only will there be a discourse, there will also be an interaction. We will work together on *saṁskāras* for the next three to four days, especially the *Guṇatraya Vibhāga Yoga* and all these chapters, which are focused on *saṁskāras*. We will work on them.

We also have courses designed to work on the dissolution of *saṁskāras*. At the basic Life Bliss Program Level 1, LBP 1 course, our ordained teachers take you through the process of removing emotional blocks associated with your seven *cakras* or energy centers. This sets the foundation by cleansing and energizing your *cakras*. Each *cakra* is blocked by some negative emotion. These blocks make you emotionally unwell and lead to physical disease in turn.

LBP 1 courses take you through a journey of these *cakras*. You meditate upon these *cakras* using specially customized *vedic* techniques that unblock and energize them. You also understand what happens when the *cakras* are blocked and how your behavior is affected by these blockages. Then you realize what can happen when these *cakras* are unblocked and energized and how you can transform your life.

LBP 1 opens up the doors to your personal transformation, which is really the spiritual transformation that you are seeking unknowingly. It opens up a whole vista of possibilities in all aspects of life: physically, mentally, emotionally, materially, and of course spiritually. Spirituality is a holistic combination of all these elements, just not any one of them.

At the next level LBP 2 course, referred to as Nithyananda Spurana Program, our teachers work with you on your seven energy layers. These energy layers contain your *saṁskāras*, the embedded memories of your life. Through specially designed meditation techniques, participants relive these memories and are relieved of them. In a sense, they are reborn, with their body-mind system cleansed of *saṁskāras*.

The LBP 2 journey cleanses you deeply of all conditioning by dissolving previously held value systems and beliefs. You may think that some of your conditioning is good and some of it bad. Some brought you what you feel is happiness and some brought you suffering. Let me tell you honestly, all conditioning and all value systems, rules of conduct and beliefs that you have ingested from birth only bring suffering. Whatever joy they may have brought was temporary and led to more greed for that joy, which in turn resulted in suffering. You can see testimonials from people whose lives have been transformed by these programs. Some have said that these programs should come with a warning: Beware! These Life Bliss Programs will change your life irretrievably!

There are advanced meditation programs, the LBP Levels 3 and 4, also called the Atma Spurana program and Bhakti Spurana program in India and overseas. These help the participant evolve into a mode and mood to receive the grace of the master. These are designed for true seekers and are not merely life solution programs.

Finally, those who have successfully completed these levels of LBP are initiated into a specialized meditation method. This meditation enables them to become channels of energy and heal others. They become Nithya Spiritual Healers.

This meditation technique that I call the *ānanda gandha* meditation dissolves *saṁskāras* continuously, so there are no accumulated *karmas* or *saṁskāras*. You can be in meditation all the time. Whatever work you are engaged in, you will be living with awareness of the present moment. When you are in the present moment, when you operate from awareness, you do not add more *saṁskāras*.

You can find out more about our courses and their content from our websites and also from Nithyananda Mission centers in your area.



Live In Me Always

12.8 You fix your mind on Me alone, establish your mind in Me. You will live in Me always. There is no doubt in it.

‘Just fix your mind upon Me, the supreme personality of the Divine and engage all your mind, body and senses in Me and you will thus live in Me always, without a doubt.’

‘*Na samśayaḥ*, without a doubt,’ He says. Now He comes to the technique. At one point the *virtuous* circle must begin. First, He explains the virtuous circle of the ultimate experience and expression. Now He comes to the technique.

Please understand that love is not a mood. It is not a mere emotion. It is our very Existence. As long as it is our mood, it will come and go.

There are two kinds of love, horizontal love and vertical love. Let me explain. Horizontal love is like a horizontal line, flat. It is related to time: it starts and ends. Anything that starts must end. If it takes more time to end, don’t think it is permanent. Anything that starts must end. It may take a few years or a few months, but it ends. It is impermanent and time bound. This is horizontal love. Horizontal love is related to time.

Vertical love is related to consciousness. Vertical love neither starts nor ends. It does not discriminate. It is our very quality. It flows. If we discriminate and love, it cannot be love. It is an infatuation. As long as the other person fits into our frame, our love grows. The moment the other person doesn’t fit into our frame, our love disappears.

In the first session of our meditation camp, I ask people to make an honest list of at least one or two persons in their lives whom they really love. Usually, in the beginning, people come up with a big list: husband, wife, father, mother, brother,

sister and so on. They include people whom they would like to please or need to please in order to be happy and undisturbed themselves.

When I begin the discourse, people start crossing out names of people from their list, one by one. Understand, if you cross out something, then it was not love even in the first place. However, people get stuck when they come to the names of their sons or daughters.

I say that all your love is for some reason. For economical benefit or psychological support, you hang onto these relationships. You have somebody as your family or as your community, so that at the time of trouble they may support you psychologically or materially.

The next reason we love is to receive good certificates, positive recognition. Sometimes we share love and show love. We may not do so for economical benefits or psychological support, but we may expect a good certificate or attention for being loving and kind. Some need for attention is always present. There is always some dependent need in us that motivates us to express love. It is never unconditional.

People say, 'No *Swamiji*. I don't love my son or daughter for any of these three reasons.'

I ask them, 'Alright, if suddenly your son starts to decide things on his own, if he doesn't fit into your frame, if he doesn't follow your guidance, if he doesn't live according to your rules, will your love be the same? Enquire honestly.'

Naturally people say, 'No, it will not be, the love will reduce a little.'

What does this mean? We love our next generation as long as they are extensions of our life. We fulfill our desires through them. We fulfill our lives through them. Whatever we couldn't accomplish, we try to accomplish through them. As long as they act and live as an extension of our life, the relationship is beautiful. But the moment they start deciding on their own, the moment they feel we are suffocating them, the moment they stand up and say 'no,' the relationship takes a different turn.

Children feel they are adults only when they say 'no' to their parents. It is a basic instinct. When they say 'no', they feel they are established as an individual. They don't bother about what you say. All they know is one word, 'no'. They do not know anything else. They feel strong when they say 'no'. That is why, all over the world youngsters always rebel. Whether it is in the West, or in the East, in all

countries all over the world, in all cultures, the youth say 'no'. When they say 'no', they feel they are strong. The word 'no' gives a certain kind of strength to them.

But our love is dependent only upon 'yes'. As long as we receive 'yes', our love also is 'yes'. When we get a 'no', we too start saying 'no'. This is horizontal love. That is why it ends with some reason. Vertical love never ends because it never starts. Suddenly, at some point we realize, we are living inside everybody just as we live inside our own body.

There is a beautiful example given in the *Upaniṣads*.

A master asked a disciple, 'Do you enjoy all your five senses'? The disciple said, 'Yes.'

The master asked, 'What if one of your senses was missing, would you have the same amount of joy?'

The disciple replied, 'No, it would be twenty percent less, and if two of my senses were missing, it would be forty percent less.'

The master suddenly said, 'What if you had five more senses?' The disciple answered, 'Naturally my enjoyment would be a hundred percent extra. If I am given one more body, naturally I will enjoy everything twice as much. Or if I am given five bodies, naturally I will enjoy things five times as much.'

If we experience that we are living in all the bodies of this world, how much joy or ecstasy would we experience? It would be immeasurable, eternal and ultimate. That is what enlightened people experience all the time! When they experience themselves as the whole universe, or as being in every body, they experience tremendous ecstasy, pleasure or bliss. That is why they don't need anything from the outer world.

An elderly person came to one of our programs. Afterward, he said to me with a lot of sympathy, 'You have become a master and an ascetic at such a young age. You have missed life.' He expressed his sympathy. He felt that I had missed out. I told him, 'Don't be sympathetic towards me. Actually I should feel sympathetic towards you. Even after sixty years, you are unable to liberate yourself. Even after sixty years, you are suffering in *saṁsāra*, the illusion of worldly life. Don't be sympathetic towards me. I should be sympathetic towards you!'

When we experience ecstasy and bliss within, we don't feel we are missing anything from the outside world. We don't feel we need something. Real renunciation is not about our renouncing the world. It is about the world

renouncing us. When we have that joy, ecstasy and bliss, we automatically radiate that bliss. We never feel that we miss anything or that we have lost something.

I tell people not to renounce the world unless they feel ecstasy inside. Never renounce. Work towards ecstasy. When that happens, renunciation automatically happens. If you renounce the outer world without having established the inner world, you will fall into depression.

I have seen many *sanyāsīs* who have taken this path without achieving the inner experience. They are caught in social service and then fall into depression. Around the age of forty to forty-five, they become depressed. They counsel the whole world while they are depressed. So many monks have fallen prey to depression. Never renounce the world unless you have had a solid experience inside.

When you have had the experience, you don't need to renounce. Automatically renunciation happens. All these things will drop you. Instead of you dropping them, they will drop you! You dropping these things always creates problems. When *they* drop you, it is the right thing. When you have that joy inside, when you start experiencing the joy in you, nothing needs to be renounced, automatically renunciation happens.

Here, Krishna gives techniques to start the virtuous circle. 'Fix your mind on Me. Establish your intelligence in Me. In this way, after acquiring the boundaryless consciousness, you will live in Me always.'

How should we establish our intelligence in Him? Continuously try to put these thoughts and ideas that Krishna teaches, inside you. Ramakrishna says that what we belch depends upon what we eat. For instance, if we eat some kind of vegetable or fruit, the smell of that comes out when we belch.

In the same way, if we add these ideas continuously to our mind and consciousness, we naturally radiate them. They start shining through our being. When He tells you to let your intelligence be established in Him, it means that when we are in trouble, the solution should automatically come to us based upon these ideas.

As of now we run and refer to a book, which means we have a guru only in the outer world. If we try and digest these ideas, even when we don't have problems, they will lodge themselves in us and take us to higher and higher levels of awareness. When we have problems, they will guide us.

If you read books *only* when you are in trouble or when you are seeking a solution, you will not digest the ideas because your mind will be confused. How

will you receive them? How can you digest them when you are troubled and confused? It can't happen this way.

When your mind is in the normal state, receive these ideas as a regular habit. Let it become your normal life style. Just as you eat and bathe everyday, in the same way, absorb these ideas regularly.

In his commentary on the Chandogya Upanishad, Shankara has written beautifully about purification of food.

āhāra śuddho satva śiddho dhruvā smṛtiḥ

When our *āhāra*, food, is purified, our memory is purified.

Please understand that *āhāra* doesn't mean just the food that we eat. It refers to whatever we take in through the five senses. Television programs that we watch are *āhāra*. Music that we listen to is *āhāra*. The food that we eat is *āhāra*. The odours that we smell are *āhāra*. The touch that we enjoy is *āhāra*.

So, all that we take in through the five senses should be pure. Only then can we radiate purity, can we radiate bliss, can we radiate ecstasy, can we radiate divine intelligence. Unless we purify the *āhāras* that is ingested through the other senses as well, we cannot expect purification of our memories. I feel blessed that when I was born and brought up, there was no television in my village.

People ask me, 'Swamiji how do you grasp things so easily?' Of course, I somehow pick up things easily, quickly. One small fact: Only a few years ago I started speaking English. I studied a little bit of English in school but that was through my native language Tamil in which I learned everything. I started speaking English regularly only when I came to America in August 2003.

I was asked how I grasp things so quickly. It is because I continuously read. People frequently ask me, 'How do you read so many books?' I never watched television when I was growing up. Television directly destroys our consciousness. Please understand, it affects not only our eyes, it straightaway destroys our consciousness.

Let me tell you an important thing. Understand this example. You are traveling in a vehicle. If you are moving at forty miles per hour, you can see everything on the road, billboards and signboards. Whatever there is to see on the road, you can see them clearly. However, if you drive at 100 miles per hour, will you be able to see anything? You can't. You will not see anything clearly. This is because you are

now seeing an increased number of frames per second. That's why you can't see anything clearly.

On television, you witness many frames per second. Because of the large numbers of frames per second, information is forced upon you, into your unconscious zone, without the control of your logic.

Your logic is analogous to having a security guard outside your home when a thief turns up. The information on the television is the thief. Logic is your guard on duty. It stands guard. Whatever information comes to you, your logic analyzes it and says, 'This is true. This is a lie. That is a toy, this is a real man. This is a fake, and this is a doll.' The information is analyzed and recorded. But when you watch the television, when the information is forced upon you, your logic loses its ability to analyze. The frames are like the thief who attacks the security guard, your logic. When the logic is put to rest, without delay the frames reach your unconscious zone and get recorded. The thief enters directly into your unconscious zone. Straightaway your unconscious is exploited. The information simply penetrates you. It is like a robber walking straight into your bedroom after killing the guard on duty.

Another important point about this is that because the information reaches you right away, you not only lose your logical and analyzing capacity, you lose your emotional balance as well. That is why, even when you know that the actor is still alive in real life, you weep when you see the actor killed in the movie! Automatically, you start weeping. Tears start rolling even though you know that it is not real, that it is not true. When they laugh, you laugh. When they cry, you cry.

According to the scenes, your moods also change. If you see a depressing scene, you feel depressed. Why? You are an educated person. You know it is a drama. You know the person is alive. You may have seen the actor a few days ago in person, but when you watch the movie and he dies, you experience grief. Why? Because the logic that analyzes this as a truth or lie is put to rest or pushed aside and information is directly flooded into your system. It is carried straight to your unconsciousness. So, never watch a program that creates depression or misery in you.

Of course, if you watch a program that gives joy, which makes you laugh, that does not hurt your consciousness directly. At the most, you may waste a little time or you may eat a little bit extra while watching the movie. Only the threat of obesity is there. Otherwise there's no problem. Surveys indicate that 80% of the

people eat while they watch television and face obesity problems because of this. This is only a small problem. But never watch anything that creates depression or brings your mood down. Then it becomes a big problem.

Let me answer one important question. People always ask me, '*Swamiji*, is there anything such as spirits or ghosts?' Let me tell you clearly that there is no such thing as ghosts, spirits, demons and no such thing as a devil. You may have one thousand references that say the opposite. I know your minds collect references from movies and books. Your mind is always collecting references. Once your unconscious believes there are spirits, you project it and actually start seeing spirits. Whatever your unconscious believes, you project and see that.

Especially after a lot of research on hypnotism, they are coming up with great truths. If a person is hypnotized and given a hot object to hold and told by the hypnotist, 'You are holding a flower in your hand, you are holding a rose,' not only does his hand not get burned, but after the hot object is removed, the hand smells like a rose!

Hypnotism has so much power, which means your unconscious has so much power. You are unconsciously hypnotized and taught that things like ghosts exist. You end up projecting and seeing ghosts. When you have an experience, it becomes a solid faith.

There is an even more disturbing fact that they have discovered. In the US, in the last decade or so, many cases of childhood trauma have come up, with children claiming sexual abuse by parents. These discoveries are usually made when, as adults, these depressed people go to psychiatrists and such traumatic happenings are discovered under hypnotic states. Cases are reported and investigated by police and regulatory authorities.

In a significant number of these cases, such abuses never really happened. It has been found that the patients developed these ideas under hypnosis as a result of judgmental probing by the psychiatrists. Treatment that was meant to cure people of their traumas ended up inducing traumas.

If you watch some horror movie continuously for three days, you will start seeing ghosts! Even a screen moving will look like a ghost. Whatever happens around you, you will connect it with the impression of ghosts that was left on your unconscious.

For example, right after watching a horror movie, let us say you feel like drinking some water. You walk into the kitchen and suddenly the cat jumps on you.

Now the whole scene is completed! You know for sure that ghosts exist. But it is purely your unconsciousness. Because you start believing it, you start projecting it. Once you start projecting it, your faith is strengthened. It is a vicious circle and you are caught in it.

Another thing, ghosts as such don't have a physical body. As ordinary humans, you have three bodies - physical, subtle and causal. Even if spirit bodies exist, they don't have a physical body. Of course, first of all, they don't exist. But for argument's sake, if I collect all of your arguments and if I must argue and accept that they do exist, they exist only in the subtle body and causal body. They don't have a physical body.

No ghost comes to you with a physical body except your spouse! If at all it were true that ghosts exist, it means they have only 66% of your capacity since their energy can be only in the two bodies that is the subtle body and causal body. You have three bodies that equal 100%. Spirits have a maximum of two bodies, so only 66%. It means they are less powerful than you. Even if they exist, you don't have to be afraid of them.

Understand this logically: Even if they exist, you don't need to be afraid of them. They are lower level beings. They are lower level entities. Firstly, they don't exist. But even for argument's sake, if I must argue, they are still lower level entities. You don't have to be afraid of them. So all this about talking to ghosts, mediums, your dead relatives and such, are purely stories. One story is built upon another story. The next story is built upon the third story; purely fictional, nothing but fiction!

A small story:

Once there was a lady who wanted to divorce her husband. She engaged a lawyer to work on her case. After meeting with the couple a few times, the lawyer said to the lady, 'I have made a settlement that is fair to both of you.'

The wife cried, 'What! I could have done that myself. Why do you think I hired a lawyer?'

As long as things support you, any idea is okay; anything is okay. Otherwise, it is a big danger for you! So I tell you, it is better not to believe in mediums and all such things. Don't waste your time talking to people who are dead. We barely have time to talk to people who are alive. Why waste time talking to people who are dead? Let us first talk to people who are directly related to our business and to our lives. Talk to them first. Work with them first. Why should we waste time with other things?

Never allow these horrible things that cause suffering, into your consciousness. If you don't allow these things into your consciousness, your intelligence will automatically be established in the Divine. The thoughts that you take in, play a major role in the expression of your consciousness. Just take in this one concept that Krishna speaks of, 'Establishing your intelligence in Me.' Please understand that whatever you take in as your inputs, you establish your mind only on that. So let your inputs be purified. Let purification of your sensory inputs, happen to you. Your consciousness will automatically be established in the Divine.

Again and again, try to absorb these ideas. Let these ideas penetrate you. Don't go behind ideas that make you feel low and that put you into depression. For example, for the last eleven days you have been listening to these ideas. Now, when a problem arises, you will automatically remember, '*Swamiji* said this. I have heard this idea. I think this is what I must understand now.' This will start arising from your being. The truth will begin to support you from within yourself.

If it starts coming up, you have heard what I have said. Otherwise, you are just a silent listener, a silent listener who is sitting here and seriously thinking of something else or passing judgment on my oratorical skills! Whether you are a silent listener or somebody who really heard the discourse, can only be determined by how much these words get repeated in you.

I tell people that when the source of the words is enlightened consciousness, the words simply penetrate you and automatically come into your mind whenever you need their help. People ask me, '*Swamiji*, how can we remember these ideas and practice them?' I tell them, 'Never bother remembering them. Just listen, that's enough. These words are from my experience. So naturally they will penetrate your being.'

Whenever it is necessary, you won't need to remember these words. The words will remember you. Without effort, these words will stay in you and surface. Automatically they will come up when needed. They will erupt into your consciousness, like a pop-up. Similar to the pop-up on your computer monitor, they come up in your consciousness and guide you. You don't need to do anything. All you need to do is listen, as a means to put them into your being. Listen to these words repeatedly. Naturally your consciousness will be established in the Divine.

Krishna says, 'Immerse your mind completely in Me. Focus your entire attention upon Me. Without a doubt you will reach the blissful state.'

Q: Respected Swamiji, is *śavāsana* (yogic posture of lying down flat on the back) okay for meditation or should we sit to meditate?

A: If you lie down, you will sleep. Even when you sit, you sleep! So naturally when you lie down, you sleep. Please don't lie down and meditate. When you sleep, you can meditate. However, when you meditate, you should not sleep! There is nothing wrong if you meditate when you are asleep. But if you sleep when you meditate, there is something seriously wrong. Don't do *śavāsana* while you meditate. But meditate when you do *śavāsana*!

I normally recommend that you sit on the floor cross-legged. If you cannot be comfortable on the floor, sit on a chair. For Nithya Dhyaan meditation, I recommend the *vajrāsana* posture of sitting on your haunches. What is important is that your head, neck and lower back should be aligned and you should not slouch. Slouching makes you drowsy and you will sleep while sitting. You do not need *śavāsana* to sleep. Even *padmāsana* and *vajrāsana* can lead determined people to sleep!

When you are sufficiently adept, you do not need any particular posture to meditate. These instructions are necessary at the initial stages. When you are initiated as a Nithya Spiritual Healer into the *ānanda gandha* meditation, you can learn to do it all the time with eyes open.

Meditation is awareness, that is all. Once you learn how to stay in the present moment, the awareness automatically happens. All these things that you do sitting in a specific posture is to bring your mind to the present moment. Meditation should become part of life instead of segregating it as a thirty-minute chore in your daily routine.



Practice To Perfection

12.9, 10 If you are not able to fix your mind upon Me, then Arjuna, with the constant practice of yoga you try to attain Me. If you are not able to practice even this yoga, then performing your duties and surrendering all your actions to Me, you will attain perfection.

Here Krishna talks about *Abhyāsa Yoga*. What is *Abhyāsa Yoga*? *Abhyāsa Yoga* is the practice or method of yoga of holding the mind constantly in a state of union with Divinity. It is the state of complete immersion in the consciousness of Krishna.

Why does Krishna speak about *Abhyāsa Yoga*? In the last chapter, Krishna gives Arjuna a glimpse of the universal consciousness, *Viśvarūpa darśan*. However, Arjuna is unable to stay in that state permanently. Arjuna comes out of the experience because of fear or old *saṁskāras*, old embedded memories of past desires. He slips from that state of consciousness. Therefore, Krishna speaks about *Abhyāsa Yoga*, how to establish oneself in that consciousness. That's why He speaks about *abhyāsa*, which means practice.

‘Oh Arjuna, if you cannot fix your mind upon Me without deviation, then follow the regulatory principles of *bhakti*, devotion. In this way, through this *abhyāsa* (practice), you will be established in Me.’

He gives a solid path, or a solid solution to take care of our whole life, to establish ourselves in that consciousness. Continuously, again and again, in our daily life, let us receive these ideas, digest these ideas in our consciousness and let our inner space be filled with these ideas. Let us not waste a few moments. Let our whole inner space be filled with these great thoughts. That is the way to establish us in that superconsciousness.

Krishna continues and gives more tips for establishing ourselves in that consciousness and radiating devotion. Krishna instructs continuously over the next

four verses. He gives various options, step-by-step. He says: If we can't do this, do that. If we can't do that, do this. Krishna gives us various options and instructions. The first thing He says is, 'Oh Dhananjaya, fix your mind upon Me. With constant practice, try to attain Me. If you are not able to practice, then perform actions for Me.'

Ramakrishna Paramahansa had advised a lady to meditate upon the form of goddess Kali. She said that however much she tried she was unable to meditate on Kali. She tried time and again and she was always distracted. She came to Ramakrishna upset that she could make no spiritual progress.

Ramakrishna enquired whether the lady's attention was diverted to someone or something else. The lady confessed that she was thinking of a young nephew, a child, whom she was fond of. Immediately, Ramakrishna advised her, 'Focus your attention on this child whom you love. Meditate upon him.' The lady came back after a few weeks satisfied. Having started her meditation upon the child whom she loved, she could meditate. And once she could meditate, she could transfer her focus to goddess Kali!

The mind can be trained. What is important is concentration. Once we learn to focus our attention completely on something, singlepointedly, we can train the mind to be like a laser beam. That laser beam can then be transferred to any object with equal facility and success.

Vivekananda has said, 'Once you learn all that there is to be known about a handful of clay by focusing your complete attention on it, you will know about all the clay everywhere in the world.'

Discipline and constant practice are essential for perfection in any endeavor. We are willing to accept this for material goals and undergo difficulty to achieve health and wealth, but not for spirituality. We usually think two things about spiritual experiences. First, that it isn't possible for us; that it is only for some rare saints in some far off cave in the Himalayas. Second, if at all we realize it is possible for us, we wonder how it can really be useful in our life. And supposing we feel that it can be of some small help, we conclude to let it happen naturally over the course of time; there's no need to bother about it now.

We now have God's word to tell us that it is not so.

Krishna refers to controlling the mind through constant practice of meditation, which is part of the *yogic* path. Meditation is not about sitting down with eyes closed for half an hour every day or every other day or when we get time.

Meditation is incessant and obsessive focus upon the Divine. Meditation is a way of life.

Since He knows that we may not be able to lose ourselves in devotion to Him, He offers this as an alternative. 'If the mind cannot be focused on Me,' says the Lord, 'try this. Practice again and again uniting with Me through meditation.' When neither seems possible, Krishna offers one more way. 'Do whatever you must. Do your duty as you need to and are able to. But then, surrender what you do to Me. Do what you do for My sake.' By performing whatever we do with total faith in Him, and with a deep feeling of surrender to Him, we reach Him.

Krishna implies two things through His statement. First, the results of whatever is done with an attitude of surrender to Him, belong to Him. Our responsibility is to do, and do it well. We have the right to 'doer-ship' not 'owner-ship'. The Lord is the owner of the fruits of actions that we perform on His behalf.

When we learn to do this, we automatically imbibe the concept of non-attachment to the end result. What happens is in His hands, not ours. We then start focusing on the path, not the goal. We focus on the process, not the product. And when we do this, our performance gets better because we no longer are stressed by what the end result might be. We are no longer worried since the outcome is in safe hands. Whatever happens is right and for the common good. If we travel with this awareness, whatever path we take is the right path. Whatever destination we reach through this right path is the right destination.

The Tamil epic, Periapuranam, describes in detail the lives of sixty-three great saints, all enlightened masters. If one studies their lives, one finds that many of them did nothing great. They went about their daily chores like many of us do, but they worshipped the Divine with a fierce awareness. If they picked flowers for the deity, they did so with single-minded focus and devotion. Nothing else mattered. When they prayed or sang, their mind, heart and being were immersed in the delight that they experienced. Their very bodies felt the form of the formless. Idols of stone and metal spoke to them. Such was their awareness.

When we offer prayers, our worship turns into a chore, work. In the case of these masters, their work became worship. If you watch people who spend time in rituals, you find that they are in a hurry to finish and move on. Move on to where? Where can they go away from the Divine?

The worst culprits can be found in places of worship. For them, worship becomes a commercial operation. God is for sale and they are the merchants. The amount one deposits in the collection box determines the attention one gets. The kingdom

of heaven comes in economy, business, and first class rates. If you search well, you can also get discount fares to heaven!

People on the island of Bali follow the Hindu faith as well as the caste system. However, in their system the priest is not a priest by birth, but by his qualification. A priest need not be born a *brāhmaṇa* to qualify. On this island, worship is a way of life. Everyday men and women offer flowers and food to deities whom they house inside small home shrines, at the sea and at the communal temples. Religion and spirituality is part of their life.

When worship becomes a way of life, when spirituality becomes a part of daily life, there is an attitude of surrender to the Divine. One feels intuitively that whatever happens will be for common good, and whatever happens for the common good is good for oneself. It does not matter if our neighbor has more than what we have. In fact, we rejoice that the neighbor has more than we have. We no longer have expectations. We have no expectations of what we hope to get. When surrender happens, there is no end-point that one strives for. Wherever the path leads is the right destination. With focus only on the path and not on the goal, expectations of what may happen drop. Whatever happens is good. This non-attachment and lack of expectations is the hallmark of a *karma* yogi, one who has surrendered his actions to the Divine.

Krishna implies one more thing. He wants us to do His service. He wants us to work on His mission. He says, 'Engage yourself in activities on My behalf, and you will attain Me.'

I tell people, 'Do not worry about whether I am here physically with you or not. Do not feel unhappy when I leave for another location. If you chase Me, you will never be one with Me. Work on My mission. In whatever way you can, work on activities that benefit humanity. Work on My behalf. Then, instead of you chasing Me, I shall chase you. I shall always be with you.' Working on the mission of the Divine is a sure guarantee to reach Divinity.

Q: If one dies on Mahā Śivarātri or any other auspicious day, does the soul have direct entry into heaven?

I think I have already answered this question. Dying at an auspicious time such as *śivarātri* or during a period such as *dakṣiṇāyanam*, *uttarāyaṇam* (Sun moving South or North) and all these things, are psychological beliefs. When Krishna says

uttarāyaṇam, He means ‘when your energy moves upwards’. That is what *uttarāyaṇam* is. When you are totally at ease with yourself, it is *uttarāyaṇam*. It has no reference to the Sun moving North.

The idea of a fast pass into heaven is psychological and there is no such thing. Places like Disney World offer a discount on Tuesdays and Wednesdays because they do not get too much of a crowd. So on some days they have special offers and discounts. There is no special offer or discount in heaven. It depends purely on the quality of the life that you lived on earth.

There is no heaven except in religious dictionaries. Heaven is not a geographical space. It is a space in your mind. If you reach awareness, you will be in bliss and you will be in heaven.

The word Shiva means auspiciousness that occurs spontaneously. It is uncaused, naturally occurring divine auspiciousness. *Rātri* also means intensity, and not just ‘night’ as we normally understand it. *Śivarātri* or *Mahā Śivarātri* is the time when this uncaused auspiciousness is at its peak. The divine will answer sincere prayers offered with deep awareness, be they for the good of the universe.

Certain planetary configurations make some days especially conducive to meditation and identification with the Divine. That does not mean prayers will not be answered on other days, or that anything that you intend casually on such a special occasion will automatically be fulfilled. In my hometown Tiruvannamalai, there is a festival at the temple every month of the year. This was a method that our ancients developed to keep awareness of the Divine within us all the time.

There is a beautiful story of an enlightened master. This master was lying down in a temple with his feet pointed towards the altar, the deity. The priest was annoyed and shouted, telling him to shift his feet away from the direction of God. The master replied weakly that he was too tired and asked the priest to turn his body around to whichever direction in which God was not present. The priest roughly pulled him up by his feet and turned him around. To his amazement wherever he dropped the master’s feet, a *Śivalinga* (Shiva’s form) appeared. The priest fell at the master’s feet and apologized for his lack of awareness.

God is everywhere all the time. There is no night and no place in which He is not present. His presence is not the problem. *Your* presence is the problem. Can you bring your mind to the present, to be present? So, do not worry about *Śivarātri* and *Vaikuṇṭha ekādasi* and such things. As far as the Divine is concerned, everyday is *Śivarātri* and *Vaikuṇṭha ekādasi*, as long as you are present!



Work For Me

12.11 If you are not able to work even this way, surrendering unto Me, give up all the results of your actions to Me without ego.

Krishna gives various options to Arjuna, one after another. His compassion for Arjuna's spiritual evolution knows no limits. 'If you cannot do this, do that. And if you cannot do that, atleast do this,' Krishna continues. In the last four verses, He continuously gives options to Arjuna.

Krishna says, 'Fix your mind upon Me alone. Live in Me.' Then He felt that He had to give Arjuna an option, in case Arjuna could not succeed. 'If you cannot fix your mind upon Me, steadily practice and practice again,' He advised. He relented further, 'If you cannot do this repetitive practice, if this is too much for you, then work on My mission. Whatever you do, do it for Me.'

Krishna now says, 'If you are unable to do even this, which is work for My sake, then just abandon your ego and turn over the results of your actions to Me.' Krishna relents from His standpoint that Arjuna should work only on those activities that are Krishna's. He feels that there may be conditions that may prevent Arjuna from devoting all his time only to those activities that are Krishna's.

See how relevant Krishna's advice is, even by today's standards. None of us can hope to sit idle and be taken care of. We must do something to occupy ourselves. In our day-to-day reality of life, not all may be able to work on God's mission alone, all the time. We may be able to spend only some time on activities that are selfless activities that benefit humanity overall, and activities that are spiritual. We need to spend a lot of time on activities that are of material benefit to us and to others related to us. Nothing is lost, assures Krishna, and He provides the bridge between material pursuits and spiritual pursuits.

Krishna brings in the core concept of the Gita, that of 'renunciation'. He says, 'Do what you must do with an attitude of surrender to Me and sacrifice the results of your actions to Me, with complete control over your self, your ego.'

We feel responsible for the results of our actions. Whether we succeed or fail in what we do, we feel responsible, either proud and happy, or guilty and sad. Our ego makes us feel responsible. We identify ourselves with what we do and the results of what we do. Success or failure in what we do makes a huge difference to us. They make a difference in how others perceive us. They make a difference to our relationships and material status, or so we feel.

Krishna says, 'If you cannot do whatever else I have told you to do, do this. Drop your ego. Drop the fruits of your actions and renounce them to me.' The freedom that results from what Krishna advises is true liberation. Once we realize that we no longer are the masters of our destiny, decision makers of the results of our actions, we feel a weight lifting off our shoulders. It is He who is now responsible for the results of our action. We still are the 'doers', but no longer the 'owners'.

One may wonder, how can I survive in this dog-eat-dog world? How can I succeed in this rat race? Remember that even if you are the winner in this rat race, you are still only a rat!

It is an illusion of our minds that we decide the results of our actions. In each one of our activities, there is so much interdependency with others and what they do, on which we have little or no control. It is pure fantasy to believe that we decide the result of our actions. We cannot even guarantee that we will survive our next breath. Our life is not in our hands. What arrogance, therefore, to imagine that activities in the outer world are subject to our control! There is a power higher than us that decides the results of our actions. Once we realize this and start believing in the wisdom of that higher power, strange and mystical things happen to us.

We just need to let the universe, *Parāśakti*, Krishna, the Divine, decide what is best for the rest of humanity and us. Let us surrender the results of all that we do to this sacred power. Whatever then happens to us is for the good, for our good and the good of everyone in this universe.

This may seem strange, even weird to our intellectual minds, having all our life been 'educated' to believe that we alone are responsible for our actions and the

results of our actions. We are going 'in' with the universe and surrendering to the cosmic power that surrounds us. Without Its grace we cannot live or take our next breath. Say, 'Do what you think is best for me' with deep awareness and see what happens. Not merely does the end goal materialize, but an immense spiritual relief will overtake you.

'Renounce unto Me,' says Krishna, 'surrender yourself to Me, and I shall liberate you.'

Q: If one should have no goal, then isn't achieving bliss also a goal by itself? Please help me understand.

Don't make achieving bliss another goal. You will miss it and mess it. Drop all your goals. Bliss will happen automatically. You cannot make a lotus flower bloom. You can create the right setting and wait. Then the lotus will bloom of its own accord. You cannot do anything. If you force open the petals, it will be a dead lotus. It will not be a living flower. So don't attempt to experience dead bliss with a plastered smile. Let the smile be from your being. Let it overflow as an expression of your inner joy.

If you plant a seed and provide the right conditions, it grows and blooms by itself. So it is with bliss. Instead, if you keep pulling the seed out to see whether it is blooming, you get nothing.

Three monkeys found a mango fruit. They didn't want to share the mango. They could not agree as to who should eat the mango. They went to a learned master monkey and presented the problem. The master monkey said, 'Let me eat the fruit. You take the seed and plant it. It will grow into a tree and bear fruits. There will be many fruits, you will have no problem in sharing.'

The monkeys obeyed and allowed the master to eat the fruit, and planted the seed. One monkey watered the spot where they planted the seed. Another provided fertilizers. And the third kept watch. Even after many weeks, the seed didn't sprout. Disappointed, the monkeys returned to the master and complained, 'You ate our fruit and told us to plant the seed. Nothing has happened. You cheated us.'

The master monkey asked each monkey what it did. The first said it watered the spot everyday. The second said it added fertilizers. The third said, 'I made sure that no one took the seed away.' The master monkey asked, 'What exactly did you do?' The third monkey said, 'Everyday I dug up the seed, brought it out, cleaned it and put it back!'

Understand, bliss will not happen if you open your mind each day to discover whether you have received bliss inside. Drop the goal of bliss, but don't stop working towards it. Follow the path of meditation, and bliss will happen by itself.



Attain Peace

12.12 Knowledge is better than mere practice. Meditation is superior to knowledge. Renouncing the fruit of actions is better than meditation. After renunciation of fruits of actions, one immediately attains peace.

Krishna gives so many instructions. Step-by-step, He gives options. Actually, these are not only for Arjuna's mind. These are for all kinds of minds.

Let me tell a small story from Ramana Maharshi's life:

Somebody goes to him and asks, '*Bhagavān*, what spiritual technique should I use?' He says, 'Do *ātma-vicāranā*, Self-inquiry. Start questioning *Who am I?*'

After a few days, the devotee comes back and says, 'It is difficult to do Self-enquiry, can I just meditate?' *Bhagavān* says, 'Alright, do meditation.'

After a week, the person returns and says, 'Meditation is also difficult. Can I do *japa*, repetition of *mantras* and recitation of verses?' *Bhagavan* says, 'Alright, do that.'

A few days pass and he is back again saying, '*Japa* is also difficult. Can I do *pūjā*, the ritual worship?' *Bhagavān* says, 'Alright. Do *pūjā*.'

Within a week the man is there asking, '*Pūjā* is also difficult. Can I start going only to the temple?' *Bhagavān* says, 'Alright, do what you want.'

Masters do not want to close the doors for anybody. Please understand, they give options for everybody. Here, in these verses, Krishna gives options to everyone.

We need to have tremendous spontaneity to understand this. Only with spontaneity will we be able to handle these instructions. For example, if you don't

feel like meditating and are in a low mood, don't try sitting in a room with closed doors, forcing yourself to meditate. Just go out, go to the temple. Spend some time freely walking and moving around. It will relax you. Then you can enter into meditation. And if you are not able to do that also, do something else. Do something that helps to keep you in a relaxed mood that makes you feel relaxed. Then, you can enter into meditation.

Here, Krishna tries to give step-by-step instructions up to the ultimate and last step. The last step is being in the consciousness, being in bliss. But just because you can't do that, don't stop trying altogether. Do something at least. I have seen people speak about meditation, about *ātma-sādhana* and all sorts of complicated things. But when it comes to practice, just thinking of meditating makes them stop their rituals, everything. In the end they do not even meditate. They say, 'I don't have enough time, *Swamiji*. My mind won't concentrate and I cannot sit quietly, *Swamiji*.'

First they stop everything in the name of meditation. Then they drop meditation because of other reasons! Then they have neither this nor that. Krishna doesn't want that to happen. We need spontaneity to decide what we need and what to do at each moment.

Whenever I utter the word 'spontaneity', I remember this personal experience. This is not a story. This happened in my native place. It was a small village, now it has become a district headquarters, a town. They used to stage plays based on the epic Mahabharata every year. In India, every traditional village would have the recitation of the Mahabharata once a year. They believed that if they recited the Mahabharata, it would rain. So they had the habit of reciting the Mahabharata. In North India, they recite Bhagavatam, another ancient Hindu epic. In the South, recitation of either Mahabharata or Ramayana takes place. In my village, every year they recited Mahabharata continuously for sixty days. During the day time they recited the story. At night they enacted a small drama based on the story. People from the village staged the drama. More than the drama, their mistakes were most entertaining!

People would gather to watch the drama, not for the drama's sake, but more for the mistakes that were made. The props were limited and what was used as a *vīṇā* (musical stringed instrument) for Saraswati, the goddess of knowledge, would be reused as a *gada* (mace) for Bhima or Hanuman, the monkey-god! Hanuman would use the same device for *gadāyudha* (mace weapon), while Saraswati would return with the same thing, using it as a *vīṇā*! It was funny to see and only four or five people would play all the roles! The casting was hilarious as well, with

Krishna being played by an eighty-five year old man, with one stick in his hand and being quite incapable of walking. He would be assisted onto stage where he would come and say, 'Oh Arjuna, stand up!' By the time he would say, 'Arjuna, stand up' he himself would fall! It was entertaining to watch the whole drama with all their mistakes.

I would watch the drama every night. Only males were allowed to act in the plays. It was also done as a ritual. People who participated wore sacred threads on their wrists, as it was being done as a ritual. They recited the verses in full and only males participated in it. Even female roles were played by male members.

One day the scene was about the disrobing of Draupadi, one of the most moving scenes in the Mahabharata. The man playing the role of Draupadi had donned make-up and wore seven thin saris. In the scene, Dushassana, the Kaurava prince, insults Draupadi, the Pandava princess, and attempts to disrobe her in public. He is supposed to pull off six saris and by the time he pulled off the sixth sari, he was expected to act tired and then fall. As soon as Dushassana pretends to fall, Draupadi is supposed to shout, 'Krishna, Krishna, save me.'

On this occasion when the scene started, Dushassana forgot to count. He was supposed to pull totally six saris. By the time he came to the sixth sari, he was supposed to fall. As he fell, Draupadi was supposed to call out for Krishna and then Krishna would appear on stage. This was how the scene was supposed to be. The actor Dushassana somehow forgot to count and started to pull the seventh sari also. Draupadi kept trying to indicate with her eyes, 'Hey, seventh sari, seventh sari!' Dushassana didn't understand. He thought Draupadi was acting well, so he kept pulling the sari!

Then all of a sudden, Draupadi started beating Dushassana, shouting, 'Hey leave my sari alone. Leave my sari! It's my sari, my sari.' Straightaway Draupadi attacked Dushassana on stage. All of us were surprised! In the morning, the story read something else and in the evening drama, things were totally different!

But Krishna, in this case, was waiting behind the screen. He was standing behind the stage, waiting for Draupadi to call. And Draupadi was shouting, 'Hey Dushassana, let go of my sari'. She didn't call Krishna. So the actor playing Krishna thought that the scene was still going on and that the sixth sari had not yet been pulled. He never arrived on the scene!

This, Dushassana didn't understand even after Draupadi kicked him, which made him so angry, that he pulled the sari off completely! Suddenly, he saw Draupadi standing in a blouse and a pair of men's shorts. Below male, above female with

complete makeup, long hair and blouse! Luckily the actor playing Draupadi had spontaneity. He quickly turned to the audience and said, 'Krishna, You are great. Because You couldn't come to save me, You turned me into a male and saved my dignity!'

Through his spontaneity, he managed the situation, and covered up for Dusshasana's and Krishna's mistakes. When you are spontaneous, you can manage any situation. Whenever I remember the word 'spontaneity', I remember this story!

Actually spontaneity is a spiritual quality. Only a man who is not caught in his past, who is able to slip away from his past, can be spontaneous. We can only be spontaneous if we don't have a vested interest in our past decisions. This means that we are open to understanding the mistakes we have made in the past and we are ready to update and improve ourselves.

If we have vested interests in the past, we may think, 'No, all these years I have lived believing this idea, and understanding things this way. Today just because something is said to me I will not change. I cannot! I am not going to change. For the last fifty years of my life, I have lived my life based on this concept, I cannot change it now.' Then we can never be spontaneous. We will miss life and miss it miserably.

The quality of life updates itself. It can be called intelligence only as long as it updates itself. When it stops updating itself, it is intellect. It can no longer be called intelligence. Intelligence is living energy.

The Sanskrit word *dhī* means 'that which is alive'. In Sanskrit, the word for intelligence is *dhī*. *Dhī* is energy that is alive, which continuously updates itself. In the Gayatri mantra (a sacred chant) that is central to Hindu worship, we seek to enhance this intelligence-energy when we pray to the Divine.

Only if we don't have a vested interest in our past, in the decisions of our past, or the way in which our past was lived, the way in which we lived our past life (not a different birth, but our life before this moment), will we be spontaneous. Spontaneity is a great spiritual quality.

Another incident about spontaneity: Once I was giving a discourse on the Isavasya Upanishad. An elderly person, who looked like a well-read scholar, walked into the hall. After the discourse, without any basic courtesy, he stood up and said, 'All these fools have not read anything, which is why you can make them listen to you. Can you make me listen to you?' I said, 'Please come nearer Sir. I cannot hear what you are saying.' When he came nearer I said,

‘Please come to this side and repeat what you said Sir.’ He moved to that side. Then I said, ‘I think there is a table in the way, please move to the other side Sir.’ He moved and came nearer. Then I said, ‘You have already listened to me three times. Now sit and listen to what I have to say!’

You can never escape from spontaneity. After this incident, sometime later, I was reading a book about a similar incident that happened in a Zen master’s life. I was surprised to see how history repeats itself! When you have spontaneity, nothing can stop you. Spontaneity is a great spiritual quality.

Here Krishna gives four different instructions. Either you can establish yourself in *Bhakti Yoga* – Path of Devotion, or live a regular life of spiritual routine, or sacrifice all the fruits of action to God, or live in consciousness and act. You can do whatever you want.

He says, ‘If not this, do this. If not these, then that...’ Now all that we need to understand is that we should not limit ourselves at one of the lower levels of Krishna’s instructions. We should always try to move or expand to a higher level. When you can’t reach a higher level, at least stay at the lower level and keep trying without renouncing all efforts completely. Keep at it. You will be surprised at what happens when you put in your sincere effort.

Somebody asked me, ‘*Swamiji*, why do we have so many gods in India or in the Eastern religions?’ All Eastern religions have many gods, whether you consider Hinduism, Buddhism or Jainism. They all have many gods, so many saints and so many gurus, while Western religions have only one God. Why?’

Vivekananda puts it across beautifully in one discourse. Freedom is the basic condition for growth. In any field, if growth has to happen, freedom is the basic condition. In the East they have had inner freedom. No one disturbs your religion here. Spiritual practice is an option. That is why we have the concept of *iṣṭadevatā*, your favorite god. *Iṣṭadevatā* means you can worship whatever form suits your mind.

The scriptures mention 330 million *devatas*, demigods or gods. Actually I think that was probably the size of the population at that time! They wanted each person to have his own customized god. That is why they say 330 million gods! If the scriptures were to be written now, they would say six billion gods. Each one has the freedom to choose their path. Each one has the freedom to choose one’s own god. Each one has the freedom to consider himself as god as he realizes the divinity in himself.

People have inner freedom, which is why the East has grown so much spiritually. In the West, you can't have your own god. In India, anyone can declare himself to be a saint overnight. All you need is ten rupees to print a poster or somebody to sponsor the ten rupees. Nothing more is necessary. You can declare yourself a saint, no problem. But in the West, you can't. Only after your death, you can be declared a saint by the religious institution. The institution decides who will be a saint.

The attitudes are totally different. Of course, both have their good and bad.

In the freedom of the East, many good things happen. Tremendous research happened in the inner world because of that freedom. Much research has been done in the inner world and many truths related to the inner world have been brought to light, brought to humanity, because so many people have entered into it. There will always be a few fakes. When so many millions of people take the path, and so many millions of things are expressed, one or two superstitions come about as well.

You may think superstitions exist only in relationship to spirituality. A lot more superstitions exist in science. At least in spirituality the masters do not have any vested interests in declaring something. Nothing significant will be added to their personal lives. They are still going to eat only that much and are going to wear only those few pieces of clothing.

But when it concerns scientists, whatever they declare is going to give them name and fame, money, and additional comfort in their lives. So naturally they have vested interests. With spiritual people, the more they renounce and the less they enjoy the outer world comforts, the more they are respected. So naturally, whatever truths they declare, whatever research they do will not add anything new to their personal lives. The respect they are given is based upon their lives, not their words. With scientists, it is based on their words. So in science, there is a greater possibility for superstitions than in spirituality. And when more and more people take to this spiritual life, there will always be one or two superstitions that result. Just because of this, we can't say that religious freedom is wrong, or that spiritual freedom is wrong. There is a lot of good in it also.

The West has social freedom. You can marry as many times as you want to. You can change your house to your taste. You can change your profession any number of times. You can dress as you wish. Nobody will be bothered. Nobody will mind. Even now, I know people in India who obey family traditions, who have not left their family homes. They don't even shift their houses. They don't change professions and they don't change lifestyles. In the East, they don't have social

freedom. They have spiritual freedom. In the West, they have social freedom but not spiritual freedom. For any growth to happen freedom is a basic necessity.

Here, with these four options, Krishna is expressing spiritual freedom. He gives spiritual freedom to us. He says that there are so many paths, and tells us to choose whichever one suits our mentality, and to practice it. He tells us to practice at least one option. It is not so important which option that we choose. It is essential only that we choose something!

In India, at least seventy percent of the population regularly visits a religious place of worship. It might be a nearby temple on their street or something in their neighborhood. Seventy percent of the population is in the habit of visiting a spiritual place regularly. They somehow manage to do it.

Eastern traditions offer many choices. If you are an intellectual person, then Shiva could be your choice and you can continuously sit and meditate. If you are inclined towards devotion, then Vishnu could be your choice. The path includes singing and dancing like the great masters Chaitanya and Meera. Just sing the glory of the Lord like the *azhwars*, devotional saints of Tamilnadu, related with Vishnu. If you are inclined towards yoga, if you are a yogi, then Devi is the one for you. Meditate on Her, offer worship and *tantric* practices.

There are many different kinds of techniques, and the options are many. So you are repeatedly given many options. You have customized ways, customized paths for your personal growth. Thus, naturally wherever one is, one can grow and reach the level one is supposed to reach. There are all sizes of ladders, all kinds of steps. You are continuously given choices, given options. Naturally, one tends to take up something or the other.

The East has explored and done much research on the inner space because of spiritual freedom. The West has achieved so much at a social level because of social freedom. Of course, India has struggled because of the lack of social freedom, but it has gained tremendously because of spiritual freedom. Here Krishna gives many choices in spiritual freedom. One cannot expect any master, other than the Eastern masters to be so compassionate, concerned, caring, and generous as to give so many options. In the West, the law is compassionate as it gives a lot of options. In the East, the spiritual system is compassionate as it gives a lot of options.

The West has a few areas where you are respected and every individual is respected, such as areas of customer care and other such domains. Many options are given within the social scenario as well. If one is unable to live with their spouse, they can say goodbye. Socially one is not bound. One has freedom.

But in India, spiritual freedom is given more importance. These four options are representative of the spiritual freedom given to society. Here Krishna gives Arjuna the spiritual freedom to choose and of course, not only to Arjuna, but through Arjuna, to all of us.

*abhyāsepyasamarthosi
mat-karma paramo bhava
madartham api karmāṇi
kurvan siddhiṁ avāpsyasi*

If you cannot practice the regulations of *Bhakti Yoga*, try to work for Me because by working for me, you will come to the perfect stage, *siddhiṁ avāpsyasi*. Then one by one He gives all options and finally says,

*śreya hi jñānaṁ abhyāsāj
jñānād dhyānaṁ viśiṣyate
dhyānāt karma phala tyāgaḥ
tyāgāc chāntir anantaram*

‘If you can’t follow these practices, engage yourself in the cultivation of knowledge.’ He says, ‘At least collect all these life solutions.’ Cultivation of knowledge means collecting solutions to life’s mysteries, such as how to avoid depression, how to be more courageous, how to be strong, how to avoid unwanted desires and how to prevent emotional blocks. This kind of knowledge that you can collect as life solutions can help and protect you.

In the USA you are familiar with earthquake kits and hurricane kits. You are taught that water bottles and other vital things should be a part of the kit and also present in the cars in Los Angeles. On the fire department’s website, there is a big list of things that one must do in order to be prepared in the event of an earthquake. They call it the earthquake kit.

Western society prepares people for these eventualities. But we also need to prepare people to face the earthquakes that happen within, the emotional imbalances that occur within. Just like preparing for an earthquake, one needs to be equipped with an inner earthquake kit. This inner earthquake kit is what I refer to as ‘life solutions’ or knowledge.

Collect these things now so that when you face depression, you will be prepared. All of us *will* face some sort of inner earthquake at some point in time. If one dies, there is no problem because when one is dead there can be no

earthquake. As long as one is alive, naturally at some point, some friends will die, some relatives will die, or some near and dear ones will fall sick or die. All these things are inevitable.

The inevitability of each moment must be understood. Understanding the inevitability of life and collecting knowledge, collecting the tools to support us at those moments, collecting the ideas to balance ourselves at those moments, is *jñāna*, knowledge. We need to prepare 'earthquake kits' for our lives. Otherwise we will be unable to recover. The aftermath will be terrible.

Because authorities never expected category five hurricanes, the aftermath has been terrible in the Gulf Coast of the US. People are struggling and it is difficult. In the same way, if we don't expect life's eventualities, and if we don't anticipate now that inner earthquakes or inner storms will occur, the aftermath will be terrible. Please prepare for the aftermath now. It will lessen the damage.

The Eastern system continuously prepares people for inner hurricanes, inner tornadoes and inner earthquakes. *Jñāna* or knowledge is the earthquake kit. Knowledge is the earthquake kit for the inner space. People are prepared. They do not have to choose between inner and outer spaces. Have an outer earthquake kit in your car, and an inner earthquake kit in your heart. We don't need to choose one or the other. Now we can have both! Because of the worldwide communication systems, even here in the West, we can have both.

Someone asked me, '*Swamiji*, Buddha enlightened ten thousand people. What is your aim?' I replied, 'Without newspapers, without telegrams, without the internet, without airplanes, if Buddha could enlighten ten thousand people, then with all these amenities, we should be able to enlighten at least one million people. Only then is it worth having all these amenities.'

Now we can have everything in the inner world and the outer world. We can have an earthquake kit in our cars and an inner earthquake kit in our hearts or inner space. Never take inner earthquakes lightly. Taking inner earthquakes lightly means we are acting out of ignorance. It means we are inviting big trouble, without preparing for the aftermath.

When quakes come in the outer world, we can blame government officials, directors and politicians. We can blame somebody and be rid of the responsibility. We can put the responsibility on someone else's shoulders. But when it comes to the inner world, we can't blame anybody. Each of us must take responsibility.

As Krishna says in an earlier chapter:

*uddharet ātmanā ātmānam
ātmānam avasādhayet
ātmaiva hyātmano bandhuḥ
atmaiva ripurātmanah*

You must help yourself ascend. If you can help yourself ascend, then you are your best friend. Otherwise you are your worst enemy. He gives options, among the different paths like practicing, cultivation of knowledge, meditation or renunciation of the fruits of actions, *karma phala tyāga*.

Among these paths, one is better than the other. First, He mentions that the path of meditation is better than knowledge. Better than meditation is offering everything at the feet of God. He says that by renunciation of the fruits of action one can immediately achieve peace. As long as we think that ‘everything is mine,’ we suffer. The moment we surrender, the moment we hand the whole thing over to the Divine, inner healing happens. Our inner space experiences the breeze of divine healing.

Often people think that surrender is some sort of loss of control. Giving up is an expression of weakness. Letting go is irresponsibility. Understand that control is an expression of ego. All control arises out of the need for ‘I’ and ‘mine’. Control seeks power. Power corrupts.

Surrender is liberation. Surrender is the expression of choicelessness, of leaving the decision to the Divine after doing what one can do. Unless we let go of our expectations and our attachment to the results of our actions, we will continue to build unproductive stress and tension within us that will reduce and not enhance our performance.

When we learn to focus totally on what we need to do and work on the process, walk the path without worrying about the destination, whatever we do is done better, faster and more effectively. Krishna’s teaching is not merely spiritual. It is highly practical. It is not only after-life enhancing, but it is present-life enabling.

He says that for the person who renounces the fruits of action, eternal peace is the immediate result. When we renounce ownership to what we do and hand over the ownership to the Divine, peace and bliss descend upon us. There is true liberation in giving up attachment to the results of what we do. This liberation comes from not having expectations of any kind. We are detached from the results of our actions. That allows us to focus totally on what we have in hand, what we

have in the present moment. Staying in the present is peace, bliss, liberation, or *mokṣa*.

Q: Dear Swamiji, if someone spends his life thinking of money, what kind of life will he have in his next birth, that of a rich man or a poor man?

You should be concerned about what happens in this life, in this birth. Why ignore this present moment and instead worry about what will happen after death? What happens depends on how you lead your life now.

But to answer your question, what happens beyond this lifetime depends on whether the money brought you as well as others around you genuine happiness or whether it brought suffering.

It is mainly based upon your intelligence to take responsibility. If you are intelligent enough to take responsibility, don't bother about your next life. In this life you will lead a rich man's life. If you are not intelligent enough to take responsibility and work for it, you will not only not lead a rich man's life in this life, but will also miss it in any other life. If you are ready to add the ingredients needed to lead the life of a rich man, you will do so now.

By way of comparison, you need to add the necessary ingredients to properly cook a particular dish. Otherwise things work out differently. A woman was preparing the evening meal. Her husband came into the kitchen and asked her, 'What are you cooking?' She replied, 'I have not decided what to call it yet. Once it is ready, I can give it a name.'

So sometimes, even if you put all the ingredients together, things don't turn out as they are meant to, and that's different. In most cases, in order to make a particular dish, one must add certain ingredients and the end result is predictable. Similarly, in order to lead a rich man's life, you need to add ingredients such as responsibility, ability to make decisions, and the courage to face life. If you have these ingredients, you can make your life rich today. You don't need to wait for the next life.

People sometimes ask me, 'No one would want to be born a beggar. That is impossible. Then why are there beggars?' During one's life as a wealthy person, the experiences are such that the soul has no desire to accumulate wealth again and therefore does not want to take responsibility. That is the *vāsanā*, the mindset that

accompanies the spirit as it leaves the body. It may decide to be a beggar with no responsibilities in the next life.

Many rich people pour their hearts out to me recounting their problems. Almost without exception, these problems are brought about by their attitude towards wealth. Their wealth alienates them from other people rather than bringing them closer together. Such people will depart from this life with a deep hatred towards wealth. Their wealth has brought them only suffering in this life. If they leave their body with this mindset, they will reenter this planet with the desire not to do anything related to wealth thereafter.

What decides the happenings in your next birth has nothing to do with your material status in this birth. Instead, it is your attitude towards that material status. It does not matter whether you were rich or poor in this birth, but it does matter a lot whether you were happy or sad. Your mindset decides your next birth.



He Is Very Dear To Me

12.13,14 One who has no dislike or envy for any being, who is friendly and compassionate to everyone, free from the sense of I and mine, the ego, maintains equanimity of mind both in joy and sorrow, forgiving, ever satisfied, united with Yoga, has a strong commitment to Me and has fixed his mind and intellect upon Me, such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.

In all the previous verses, Krishna tells Arjuna to do this or do that. Now, He is not saying do this or do that. He says, 'Those who do all these things are very dear to Me. If you don't do these, that too is okay. However, if you do them, you will be very dear to Me.' In other words, it is emotional black mail, not directly but indirectly, but all for a good cause!

'One who is not envious, but is a kind friend to all living entities, who does not think of himself as a proprietor, and who is free from false ego, who is equal in both happiness and distress, who is tolerant, always satisfied, self-controlled, and engaged in devotional service with determination, with intelligence fixed on Me, such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.'

Understand here, He says, 'Who is not envious and a kind friend to every living entity.' These are important qualities. Let us analyze our minds. When we honestly analyze our mind, we realize that if somebody came to you and told you he loved you, you wouldn't believe it. The first thing you would do is figure out what he wants from you. You don't believe you are worthy of being loved. Next, you don't believe that somebody can honestly love you, because you don't love anybody honestly. Because you are calculative, you expect the other person also to be calculating. All our love is skin deep and you know how deep skin is!

Here, He says, 'A person who is a kind friend of everyone, who honestly serves, feels the friendliness in everybody and is free from false ego.'

Now we should understand the term 'false ego'. Ego not only means showing what you don't have, but also hiding what you have.

There are two types of ego: active ego and passive ego. Active ego is showing what you have and passive ego is characterized by these kinds of thoughts, 'Oh, what can I do, I am a simple person, I cannot achieve anything, and I cannot do anything.' Hiding oneself is an outcome of the passive ego. An inferiority complex is a manifestation of the passive ego.

At least there is one positive point regarding the superiority complex. With a feeling of superiority, wherever one goes, one gets a big beating. Society tries to cut you down to size. You may then try to overcome your superiority complex. But with inferiority complex, society does not attempt to correct you. It is a cunning way of hiding yourself from life. You will not even know that you have a problem. So a person hiding in the inferior ego suffers more deeply than someone who hides himself in the superior ego.

A person who looks for fame and name, and a person who doesn't want fame and name are both egoistic. If you ask for name, you are egoistic. And if you don't, it shows passive ego. Whereas a person who lets things happen and a person who allows things to flow, lives in reality.

Krishna makes a comment, 'After all, who is going to know who you are? Why do you think you are a big person and your name is so great and that everybody knows your name? You think you are great, that is why you don't want name and fame. Nobody knows your name, relax.' Krishna says clearly, 'Nobody knows your name, relax.'

Nobody knows our name. Asking for name and fame and saying, 'I don't want name and fame,' are different aspects of ego, different varieties of ego. The inferior ego is also ego, which is why he says 'false ego'. You are not only supposed to be free from ego, you are supposed to be free from false ego as well. You shouldn't hide yourself in inferiority complexes.

A small story:

A master tells a disciple, 'Please press my feet.' The disciple says, 'Oh, I am a sinner, how can I touch Your feet?' He does not want to do it because he is lazy. So he says, 'I am a great sinner. How can I touch Your feet; how can I do that?'

Later, a devotee brought fruits and *prasād*, offerings. The master put a little in his mouth and left the rest. The next day, he saw nothing on the plate. He

asked his disciple, 'What happened to the fruits and *prasād*?' The disciple answered, 'It was *guru prasād*, offering to the master. I could not let it go for a waste. I finished the whole thing because it was *guru prasād*.'

Look at the mind, how nicely it handles situations and different concepts! Wherever we want, we insert whatever is convenient. When he didn't want to work, he said, 'No, how can I touch Your feet. I am not qualified enough. I am not a pure soul.' When he wanted food, it was *guru prasād* and he finished it!

We collect concepts to support our ideology. That is why it is said that the devil quotes the Bible. Only the devil quotes the Bible. When you quote only specifics, you become the devil. But when you understand the essence of the Bible, you become God. You don't need to quote the Bible then. People will quote your words. When you have digested the Bible, you don't need to quote it. People will quote *your* words. When you have not digested the Bible, whenever you quote it without digesting it, you are the devil. Only the devil quotes the Bible, not a person who understands it.

The moment you understand the futility of your goal and wealth, that nothing is going to be with you forever, all of these divine qualities radiate through your being. You will be transformed into a person who is established in forgivingness, who maintains equanimity of mind, who is satisfied and united with yoga. Actually, when you are blissful inside, you radiate these qualities. A man who is totally blissful inside radiates pleasantness for absolutely no reason.

We continuously carry a sense of slight irritation in our being; we are waiting to pounce on people. The moment we get a chance, we scream, shout and throw tantrums. We don't know what we are doing. We jump and bite people at the slightest provocation, because we carry some irritation within us. We continuously vomit upon others the suffering and misery that we feel.

This irritation arises within us out of constant worry and constant inner chatter. We feel we may not get what we are planning for and what we want. All worry is about the future based upon what happened in the past. Worry is about expectation of what the future holds for us. Worry arises as a result of the gap between what we expect and what we think we are capable of getting. So we become anxious about whether things will happen the way we expect them to.

Worry is futile because there are many factors other than our capability that determine the outcome of what we do. The expectation of the outcome is futile since the future is speculative. We cannot control even our own breath. We cannot

say with certainty whether we will take the next breath. What arrogance it is then to think that we can determine our future or the outcome of our actions!

Worry, anxiety and irritation dissolve once we settle into the present. Only in the present are we in a position to influence our actions and the immediate outcome of those actions. When we settle into the present, thoughts cease and worry and irritation disappear. We realize how irrelevant and unproductive worry is.

In meditation courses, I ask people to write down whatever they are worried and irritated about at that juncture in their lives. Many write volumes. I tell them to keep the papers and tell me after six months how many of these worries materialized. You will be surprised, less than twenty percent of these worries actually materialize.

Worry and irritation are pointless. Once you understand the futility of irritation, however irritated you are, whatever you create by that irritation or tension will not stay with you. Only how you live, how consciously you live, with what consciousness you choose to live remains with you. When you understand the importance of your state of being, you automatically start radiating pleasantness and joy.

I give people a simple meditation technique to experience *Bhakti Yoga* – the Path of Devotion. Just practice the technique of radiating pleasantness. How does one do it? From morning till night whenever you remember, inhale, inhale, and inhale only the pleasant qualities of bliss. Visualize you are inhaling bliss and exhaling bliss. Your whole being will be filled with joy. In the beginning you will be visualizing, imagining. But in a few days you will realize it is your quality.

One more thing you should know is that imagination and visualization are two different things. Imagination translates into *kalpanā* in Sanskrit, while visualization translates into *bhāvanā*. *Bhāvanā* is different from *kalpanā*. *Kalpanā* means imagining things that are not there. For example, if you think of an elephant with ten trunks, that is imagination, *kalpanā*, that which is not there. But *bhāvanā* means visualizing that which is present but maybe eluding you.

If you sit during the day and visualize stars in the sky, that is not imagination. It is visualization. Because stars are in the sky even though you are unable to see them. So visualizing stars is not imagination. Perceiving what is there but what you are unable to see at this moment is visualization. Trying to perceive what can never exist is imagination.

So understand that meditating on gods and goddesses is not imagination. It is visualization. They are there. You cannot see them; that is all. You are supposed to fall in tune with them, like tuning your television. If you tune your television, you can immediately watch many programs. Similarly, visualization is tuning yourself. Just continuously visualize inhaling and exhaling bliss. Visualise *prāṇa* - the life giving energy - going inside and coming out. *Prāṇa* is energy and bliss. Please understand that *prāṇa* is not merely air. *Prāṇa* is the energy that goes through air. For example, a truck comes up to your house and unloads luggage and leaves. The truck is air and the luggage is *prāṇa*. *Prāṇa* is not just air. Using air as a medium, *prāṇa* enters. *Prāṇa-shakti* is the subtle part of air. *Prāṇa-shakti* is bliss energy, *ananda-shakti*.

So whenever you inhale, visualize yourself inhaling bliss. When you exhale, visualize yourself exhaling bliss. Inhale light and exhale light. Think that your whole body is a beanbag filled with light. Imagine your body is a beanbag filled with bliss and light. You will automatically start radiating bliss instead of irritation. Instead of vomiting the poison of anger and jealousy on others, you will radiate love and bliss.

‘Such a devotee of mine is very dear to Me.’ Krishna says that if somebody lives in this manner, that devotee is close to Him. He doesn’t say ‘Do or don’t do.’ He does not want to make more rules. He is tired of making rules. He has reached a point where his attitude is, ‘If you can, do it, otherwise, what can be done?’ He is in a relaxed mood.

I think this happens to all masters. All masters come to this point after some time. After some time they say, ‘Alright, do whatever you want, what can be done?’ They can guide or show you only to a certain extent. Beyond that if masters persist, people start thinking that the masters have some vested interest in making people enlightened. It is as though if they make ten more people enlightened, they will have a special place in heaven, or god will increase their salary. Understand, they just share what they have, out of joy and bliss.

A small story:

A prisoner was cross-examined in the court.

The lawyer asked, ‘Do you know this man?’

The prisoner answered, ‘How should I know him?’

The lawyer asked, ‘Did he borrow money from you?’

The prisoner replied, ‘Why should he borrow money from me?’

The judge was irritated by now and asked the prisoner, 'Why do you ask so many questions? Why can't you just answer the lawyer's questions?'

The prisoner replied, 'Why should I not ask questions?'

Understand, this is exactly what happens in life. You are not ready to trust the master. You keep resisting Him. When the master says drop 'I and mine,' people are afraid that the master may pick them up and take it with him! He may take it away. What to do? They think he is in need of it, which is why he asks them to drop it. They think, 'He is asking us to drop it, so he can take it.' People are suspicious. That is why masters sometimes say, 'This is the right way, but do as you want to do.'

'One who has fixed his mind and intellect upon me,' says Krishna. It is difficult for the devotee and disciple to have this attitude of surrender to the master or the universe. As long as things go the way the person wants, as long as the master allows the devotee to do what he wishes, the master is a great master and worthy of celebration. But once the master turns serious and takes up his responsibility of spiritual surgery on the disciple, he wants to run away.

I tell people, 'Decide well in advance whether I am your right master or not.' A master takes his responsibilities seriously. His major responsibility is surgery; it is the surgery of the cancer of ego. Once the disciple makes a commitment, the master makes his commitment too. It is dangerous to run away from the operating table. You lose your whole life by running away. You may have to wait many births before you get another chance.

Here, Krishna is in the same mood and He says, 'Such a devotee of Mine is dear to Me,' that's all. He is talking about the commitment that the devotee makes to Him. He says, 'One who makes that commitment to Me and fixes his mind and intellect upon Me, he is dear to Me and will be liberated.' So says the great master.

Q: Respected Swamiji, I worship the formless form of God. Can I still follow you and become your disciple?

Only if you worship the formless in form, can you understand and relate with me easily and truly follow me. As I have told you, I have given instructions. My disciples cannot meditate on my form. They should not meditate on my form. They

must only go into conscious experiences. I do not want them to be caught up with my form. Not only *my* form, never get caught up in any master's form. God is only a concept to most of you. To a realized master, God is reality. A master, an enlightened master is more than God since He is reality to you, not just a concept. Whether the master is present or not, His presence works.

People ask me whether dead masters can help a person's spiritual progress. Please understand this: dead masters are not dead as you think. Their energies are as powerful as when they were in the body. This is why in the *vedic* tradition, enlightened masters are not cremated, they are just entombed. Their final resting places, *jiva samādhis*, are energy centers - like spiritual nuclear reactors. Many great temples in India, especially in South India, have been built on the final resting places of enlightened masters and have high energy levels.

So do not think that dead masters are not present around you. Their energies are what keep the negativity in this planet from going out of control. They respond to you. They answer your prayers. By the same logic, do not think that the body of the living master, the form of the living master, is the end point of your search. The living master is far greater than his form. Do not limit me to this six-foot form and be enamored by it.

Do not think I am present when I am in front of you. Do not think that I am absent from you when you are not in my presence.

I tell my disciples: your chasing me does not work. Work for the mission; serve the mission. It is the mission of Existence. Then I shall chase you. I shall be in your hearts. That is the message of the superconscious Krishna.



Be Unaffected

12.15 He, by whom the world is not affected adversely, and who in turn does not affect the world adversely, and he, who is free from joy, anger and anxiety, he is dear to Me.

Krishna says, 'He who is not affected adversely or agitated by the world and who in turn does not affect or cause agitation in this world.'

Only the person who is centered on his being, centered on the ultimate consciousness, does not create havoc in the world. Just by being in the presence of an enlightened person, our minds calm down. We become steady. I can say that not only is the world not adversely affected by such persons, the world is blessed by their presence.

Once a person realizes that they are one with the Divine and all of Existence, how can there be any fight? How can there be any drama? There can't be! There is only the experience of intense love and compassion on its own and towards all beings.

How can there be any small enjoyments or agitations when someone is continuously experiencing eternal bliss? It is impossible. For the enlightened one, it has all become a game, a *līlā*. And he sees that the game exists in him and not that he exists in the game.

Here Krishna is saying that the persons who are expressing from their core, unaffected by the happenings around them, are dear to Him because they are centered on Him.

For most of us, that isn't the case. We live on the periphery of our personalities and make a mess of things wherever we go. To most of us, joy is a period between experiences of sorrow and unhappiness. It is like a period of quiet between two battles that we call peace, just as impermanent and just as unreal.

Joy and temporal pleasure from sensory experiences invariably lead to sorrow. Joy is the by-product of fulfillment, of an expectation. When the expectation is fulfilled the first time, we feel happy. Most likely, this may not happen the next time around. So instead of joy, sorrow follows.

Joy can only be experienced internally if it is to be longlasting. Such joy is more accurately called bliss. Bliss is eternal, unlike joy, which is transient. Bliss is eternal. It arises when we drop expectation, when we stay centered on our being, when we are in the mood and mode of non-attachment.

‘Nissangatve nirmohatvam... nirmohatve niscalatattvam... niscala tattve jīvan muktiḥ,’ says Shankara in Bhaja Govindam. Non-attachment leads to the elimination of desires. A ‘no desire’ state leads to a calm and peaceful mind, a mind full of bliss. A blissful state leads to liberation.

When Krishna refers to a state of not being in joy, He refers to this temporary transient joy, which is a by-product of our desires, the joy that comes and goes. It is powered by our illusions and fantasies. Only when one goes beyond this joy with its peaks and valleys can one truly reach a blissful state. Both joy and sorrow must be transcended for us to experience bliss.

Anxiety is the cancer of our spirit. From the moment we are capable of thinking, we are in anxiety. We worry. We worry all the time. Worry, anxiety and the resultant stress are our crutches in life. Our anxiety comes out of our fear that we may not be able to fulfill expectations. We have our desires and hopes. We have our capabilities that we are generally aware of. Very often our desires and capabilities don’t match. There is a gap. This gap creates the worry.

If we close our eyes and try to focus on an object or event, after a few seconds we see that we can’t continue. No thought or idea can control our inner space eternally. Always there is another thought that comes along to replace the last thought. This is the inner chatter of our mind. Buddha refers to it as the ‘monkey mind.’

This chatter is the constant jumping of our mind between past and future. It is the journey that our mind undertakes between what it has experienced and stored as memories and the unknown, which is full of expectations and speculations, also based upon the past. This jumping, this journey, is what we call thoughts.

Anxiety builds as our ego realizes that what it desires may not happen. This loss of something that has not even happened, the product of pure speculation, causes intense emotions within us. Long before anything happens we anticipate with great

anxiety that the worst can happen. Then we wait with bated breath for the event to pass. Quite often you would have experienced a sense of relief when the worst you had imagined had actually come to pass. There is no longer any anxiety when the future has moved into the present.

Anxiety lives and breeds in thoughts about the future. Its source is our ego. Ego creates expectations. Expectations related to 'I' and 'mine', 'identity' and 'possession' create the fear that what is expected may not happen. To move out of anxiety, we must move into the present moment. That is the only point at which our inner chatter stops and anxiety disappears.

When Krishna says, 'He who is without anxiety will reach Me,' He says that he who is in the present moment will reach Me. In the present moment our thoughts cease and we can see with clarity the truth of our Existence, Krishna consciousness, and then we are one with Him.

'Let go of anger,' says Krishna. 'He who is without anger shall reach Me.' By the literal understanding of this verse, none of us can reach Krishna. All of us express anger at one time or another. Anger is a positive energy. Expressing anger can be positive, both for the person expressing the anger and the one receiving it. This may sound strange but it is true.

Anger is often the product of guilt. We get defensive when our spouse points out something we did not do in the way that they wanted. We move into a defensive position. We feel guilty when we realize we did wrong. But instead of accepting the wrongdoing, we become angry. We would like our wrongdoing to remain our secret and we dislike the other person for bringing it out into the open. It is like a leper not wishing to see his own sores.

In a sense, this anger is also directed at ourselves. The guilt we feel is the result of the internal rage against our own weakness. Guilt is the biggest sin we commit. Whatever we do at a point in time, we do with the knowledge and awareness we possess at that time. Once we have done what we have done, there is nothing within our power to change it.

'The moving hand writes and moves on,' says Omar Khayyam in Rubaiyat, 'having written, it moves on. Neither your tears nor all your piety can make it move back.' The past cannot be undone. But guilt can be undone. Guilt can be dropped. You can accept what you have done and move on. You can even accept that you cannot accept and move on. You can let go of your guilt.

When we let go of guilt, then we can let go of anger. When we let go of guilt, we let go of our suppressed emotions of anger, regret, defensiveness and the internal fury. Repressed anger can cause cancer. People who appear calm on the surface, controlling the anger that they feel without expressing it, are sitting on a time bomb. Either it can explode unexpectedly causing grave danger to themselves and others, or it can lead to self-destruction through cancer. It is perfectly possible.

In the Malayan culture, from childhood onwards one is taught not to express negative emotions of grief, anger, irritation and so on. Everyone is supposed to be calm and collected. Suddenly, however, the fuse blows. They call this 'running amok'. This word is now part of the Oxford dictionary. It means that someone is going totally out of control, creating havoc, trying to control results in total loss of control.

One may then ask, what about road rage? What about havoc created by violent expressions of anger? If one learns to let go of anger as it arises, there will be no rage, road rage or home rage. We bottle up emotions and they burst out. Inner anger keeps building up from childhood for various reasons. We build up all the negatives we can think of about society. We are unable to express these for societal reasons since they are not considered appropriate, cultured and civilized. Then it must blow, sooner or later.

We should learn to direct anger at issues rather than at people. When anger rises against people, divert it to issues instead of towards a person. The person is only the perceived cause as you see it. The deeper issue remains covered if you direct the anger against the person. It comes back more dangerously. Anger breeds anger. It is a vicious cycle. If however, we express anger and express it fully against the incident, event, or issue, without personalizing it, we can let go of that anger without harm to others and us. It is possible. You need to practice, that's all. When the emotive memory of that anger is expressed, the memory dissolves. No anger remains. Over a period of time, the anger disappears even before it rises. Krishna says that one must reach this 'state beyond anger' in order to be able to reach Him.

Q: What is the meaning of the rebirth of Self-realized saints?

Self-realization or enlightenment is the state in which one is no longer bound by one's *karma*, *saṃskāra* or *vāsanā*. There are no unfulfilled desires that bring one back to rebirth. There is no carried over mindset that determines the conditions of one's reentry into this planet. One is liberated from the cycle of rebirth, *saṃsāra*.

These enlightened beings merge into the cosmic energy or *Parāśakti*. They do not return to a body form as other entities with unfulfilled desires do. However, from then on, the universal energy decides what happens to them, rather than a mind-body system dictating it.

Out of compassion to help the world, *Parāśakti* sends a few enlightened energies to earth. She decides to activate a few enlightened bodies to help planet earth. It is Her decision. We can't do anything about it, and we don't even know the basis on which She decides. We can only put in an application. You don't know how it will come, when and why it will come or why it will not come.

It is like an American visa! You just need to submit the application and wait. When it will come through, why it comes through, and why it doesn't come through, nothing is known. You only have the result, that's all. You will be informed as to whether it comes through or not. Nothing much can be done. In the same way, this is *Parāśakti's* decision, nothing is known about it.

An enlightened master has dissolved his *saṁskāras*. He has no *vāsanā*, no mental setup that pulls him for a rebirth by design. The choice is not His or Hers to be reborn. It is as if there is a vacuum on this planet that sucks the energy being of the master back into this planet and into a womb. When I was born, there was a light from the place known as Arunachala that guided my energy in. Arunachala is my birthplace.



Selfless In Action

12.16 He who is free from wants, who is pure and skilled, unconcerned, untroubled, who is selfless in whatever he does, he who is devoted to Me, he is dear to Me.

Krishna now moves into higher gear. Once you let go of joy, anxiety and anger, once you transcend these emotions, you reach a state of calmness that takes you close to Him. Now, He moves from 'nissāṅgatvaṁ' to 'nirmohatvaṁ,' from emotional non-attachment to non-attachment to desires.

We need to understand the difference between 'wants' and 'needs'. Needs are necessary for us to survive on planet earth, like the basic needs of food, shelter, etc. The great Jain master Mahavira says, 'The moment you are born on this planet, the universe sends everything with you that you need. It provides for all your basic needs.' We just need to trust the universe and we shall get what we need to live. We shall not want anything else.

However, we end up seeking more. Basic needs are no longer enough. We see our neighbor. We cannot bear to see that others are happier than we are. We are happy to see people who suffer. This only shows our own state of sorrow in a better light. We feel better when others are in the same boat as us.

If a neighbor buys a new air conditioner, the temperature in our house shoots up. If the neighbor buys a refrigerator, the foodstuff in our house starts rotting. If the neighbor buys a new car, our car suddenly slows down. Everything we have is a match for what others have. It is a constant cycle of 'What next? What next?' Even before we start enjoying what we have got, we make a plan to get more. There is no joy in having, the joy is in chasing. There is no end point to this chase.

When you become the richest in your family, you need to become the richest on the street and then the richest in the town, then the richest in the country and then the richest in the world. There is no end. Ramana Maharshi says so beautifully and poignantly, 'This universe can cater to the needs of all its people, but it cannot meet the *wants* of even one person.'

Wants are endless. Wants are suffering. Wants are born out of comparison with others. Needs, our basic needs, carry the energy within them for fulfillment. Wants only carry the seeds of our own suffering.

During our Nithyananda Spurana Program, or LBP Level 2, we take participants through the seven layers of the energy bodies that the spirit passes through when we die. In this process, the departing spirit remembers all that happened during its time in the body until the point of death. It is like a fast replay of all that has happened, every incident that is stored on the hard disk of our memory.

In one of the sessions, I ask people to make a list of their desires, their needs and wants. They fill pages with it. I ask them to review the list many times. Then they do a certain meditation. At the end of the meditation, I ask them to recollect from memory their list of desires. What they can recollect is usually a fraction of what they have written. It is as if they started with a large tree full of leaves, their desires, and during this meditation the tree shed almost all its leaves, as if the leaves were dry and dead. What it retained glowed like golden leaves.

Whatever is left in their memories, those desires glow like gold. They are the ones that carry the energy for their fulfillment! These desires are the true desires that they carry. If the process is done with awareness, these desires are always selfless desires. They may benefit the individual, no doubt, but they always benefit humanity. Only such selfless desires carry the energy of the universe with them for fulfillment.

When our desires are our own true desires, when they reflect our real needs, when they express themselves in our inner energy, we don't feel any desperation about trying to achieve them. The realization comes that, as a matter of the natural course of events, these desires will be fulfilled. We are not driven and we are not troubled. We accept that these will happen. Therefore, Krishna counsels Arjuna, 'Become free from wants, be selfless and you shall be untroubled, liberated and you will reach Me.'

Q: Respected Swamiji, each day I learn beautiful knowledge, and I am so happy. Then I go back home and feel a little confused, even depressed. What is going on?

The right thing is going on. Don't worry! Whatever is going on is the right thing. In the initial level this is the way it happens. Don't count the moments of depression. Instead count the number of blessings. By its own light the moon shows the black patches which exist on it. By its own light it shows the black patches. Similarly, by your own intelligence you understand how you feel depressed and confused. If you realize that you are confused and depressed, that in itself shows you are intelligent. That by itself shows that you are growing in intelligence, and that the light has started radiating.

When you are thoughtless, you have no confusion. You have no clue about the higher purpose of life and you are happy about what you have always been doing - eating, drinking, playing, working, whatever. Thoughtless people are happy in their own way. They do not think. They behave like animals. All they seek are the pleasures that an animal would seek. They are satisfied at that level. That is how they live and die.

When you think, you get into problems. You realize that you are not doing what you are here for. You start seeking a purpose. You are confused. You are unstable. One moment you are attracted to the pleasures that have sustained you for so long. Then, you reject them, as they are not what you think will sustain your happiness. You start seeing the light. Gradually, slowly, very slowly, you move from darkness to light.

That is where the guru, the master comes in. He leads you from the darkness of ignorance into the light of truth and reality. Then you reach the state of no-mind, of no thoughts. It is not the same as thoughtless state. Thoughtless state is that of the animal, of instinct. No-mind, no-thought state is that of the Divine, of intuition. Thoughtful state is that of the human, of the rational mind.

The entire dialogue in the Gita arises out of the confusion that Arjuna has as a thoughtful human, and this is resolved by the no-thought state of Krishna, the superconscious. Doubts and confusion are human. They are the result of the movement from the thoughtless state to the no-thought state.

Humans are eccentric by nature. Our senses constantly draw us to the peripheral areas of our sensory perceptions, exposing us to the outer world. We experience pain and pleasure and we get addicted to both. Suddenly some of us experience a tug inside that pulls us inwards. Not knowing why or how, some of us move

inwards temporarily, renouncing the attraction of our senses. But this does not last long. We again get pulled back to the periphery.

So we keep swinging in and out. Not all of us certainly, but a large number of us have experienced in the distant past a taste and a glimpse of our true nature. While swinging in and out, we settle somewhere in between, neither at the center nor at the periphery. We become eccentric!

This is what is happening to you. As you get more and more immersed in the words and truths of the great master, Krishna, you will find that moving inwards is not only easier but truly blissful. Finally, you settle into your center that is eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.



Equanimity Of Mind

12.17 He who does not rejoice or hate or grieve or desire, renounces both good and evil and who is full of devotion, he is dear to Me.

Krishna now goes into another level of controlling the mind. He now refers to one who does not love or hate. He is not talking about not loving anyone. When we love the way we do, with conditionality and expectations, it works well as long as these expectations are fulfilled. When something does not work the way we wish it to, the love disappears like a dewdrop in the sun. In its place, hate appears.

Hatred and love are opposite sides of the same coin as long as love is conditional. Love can flip into hatred in a moment, the moment we feel that our expectations are threatened. In love of this type, there is external rejoicing, sharing of joy and happiness and public expression of happiness as long as the emotion remains.

Often, love or what we believe is love is related to time and space. So long as the distance is large and the time of contact is minimal we see a few defects in those we profess to love. We aren't together long enough to put expectations on them. However, once we get closer and spend more time, we see the real picture. No wonder they say, 'Familiarity breeds contempt.' It can also convert love into hatred. To transcend love and hatred which are two different expressions of the same perceived reality, we need to drop expectations. We need to develop a sense of non-attachment. We need to be unconditional in our love.

We all go through several stages of relationships in our lifetime. As children, we are totally dependent upon parents. Our parents influence us and our love for our parents is conditional. We love them only because there is no option. To survive, a child must depend upon its parents. An infant's natural behavior is self-centered and whatever natural emotion it has for its parents and guardians is geared to its own survival. It is one of absolute dependence.

As we grow into adolescence, we open up to the world and question many things we took for granted as an infant or a child; therefore, teenagers rebel. Adolescents throw away the dependence that they had for parents and elders. They wish to be independent. They break rules.

In adulthood, we learn that to survive and coexist, we need to follow societal rules and regulations. We develop skills to get along with others. We learn to work and relate with others. Otherwise, we may become misfits in society. The single most important lesson that people learn in adulthood is that it is important to relate with people meaningfully.

As we grow and mature, and the spirit and its development become important, we seek guidance. We look for a master. With the master, the relationship is the reverse of what we started with as a child. We are once again concerned about survival, but it is the survival of the spirit and not the mind or body. To help in this survival of the spirit, the relationship that we need with the master is one of absolute dependence once again, but with a difference. For the relationship to work, it now needs to be totally unconditional and based upon deep trust.

The only relationship that will work with the master is total and unconditional love. It is absolute surrender. Surrender transcends love and hate. When one is in a mood of total surrender to the master or the Divine, both being one and the same, the concept of good and evil, sin and merit disappear.

In a spiritual sense, there is nothing that is a sin. No one is sitting up there with a notebook and pencil and deciding whether we should go to hell or heaven by measuring our sins. There is no hell or heaven. Hell and heaven are not geographical. They are psychological, within our mind and attitude. We commit sins because we are already in our own hell. We do well to others when we are in our space of heaven or bliss.

Religions try and control us through concepts of sin, original sin, hell and heaven. Please understand that there is no such thing as sin, or hell and heaven. Those who term you sinners are sinners themselves. That's why they call you sinners because they wish to control you. All religions try to control through fear and greed, through the carrot and stick.

Krishna breaks the mold. He tells us, 'Go beyond good and evil.' He says this because there is no such thing as good and evil. It is all in our mind. When we understand this truth we are in His realm. That's His promise.

Q Dear Swamiji, during the great war of Mahabharata everyone was following unlawful methods. Why?

At the beginning of the Mahabharata war everybody followed *dharma* - righteousness. But after a while you start seeing *adharma*, non-righteous behavior, such as killing at night. All five sons of the Pandavas were killed when they were sleeping. Arjuna attacked Karna when he was unarmed. Abhimanyu was killed by a group of warriors. He was alone without a weapon, without a chariot. His own relatives killed him in the presence of his grandfather and he was hardly eighteen years old then.

The question you are asking is right. What happened exactly is that when the war started, it was for *dharma*. Slowly, the Kauravas went one step further, so the Pandavas also took one step beyond *dharma*. The Kauravas broke more *dharmic* rules in retaliation. So the Pandavas kept pace with the Kauravas.

By the tenth day, all rules were broken and it turned into a brutal war. After the tenth day it could no longer be called *Dharma kṣetra*, place of *dharma*. It was called *dharma kṣetra* as long as Bhishma was the commander. It seems as if the moment Bhishma moved away from the battlefield, from that day onward, it could not be called *dharma kṣetra*. It was just a brutal field, not a battlefield.

The Mahabharata war was a representation of life as it was lived in that age. Vyasa, its author, has not tried to apply makeup. People ask whether the Mahabharata war happened at all. Let me tell you this: If the Mahabharata was a story and not history, Vyasa should receive multiple Pulitzer prizes for his highly creative work! The Mahabharata is the longest literary work in the whole world. It is larger than the Greek epics. Vyasa had no computer, no tape recorder with speech-to-text capabilities. He dictated and Lord Ganesha wrote it down!

The Mahabharata has at least 10,000 stories woven into it. All of these are seamlessly woven into the main text even though each is an independent event. Just imagine the effort required to create hundreds of thousands of characters and maintain the integrity of these characters throughout the epic without the help of editors. Do you think anyone could do it today?

Because it is impossible to create such a work of fiction, one needs to accept this as a compilation of true incidents that reflect the lifestyle in what is referred to as *Tretā yuga*, third quarter of Time, in our scriptures. This is how people behaved then and how people behave now.



This Is Whom I Love

12.18,19 One who treats friends and enemies the same, who faces in the same manner honor and dishonor, heat and cold, happiness and sorrow, fame and infamy; one who is always free from attachment, always silent and satisfied with anything, without a fixed home, who is fixed in mind and who is devoted to Me, such a person is very dear to Me.

12.20 Those who truly follow this imperishable path of righteousness with great faith, making Me the supreme goal, are very dear to Me.

Again Krishna says, 'Such a person, full of devotion is dear to Me.' He is not ready to put down any more rules, which means He is almost ending His instructions. He is almost saying, 'This is the way, if somebody is like this then I love him, that's all. I am not interested in anything else.' He says, 'One who is neutral towards friends and enemies, who is the same in honor and dishonor, heat and cold, joy and pain, free from attachment to the fruits of action, who remains the same in criticism and praise; who is thoughtful, who is content with whatever he gets, who does not care for any house and is resolute in mind, such a man, full of devotion is very dear to Me.'

Here is a beautiful phrase, 'One who does not care for any house and who doesn't bother to build a house for himself.'

Let me tell you a story. Ravana lived for one *kalpa* (many thousands of years). Vyasa lived for four *kalpas*. Ravana was building Lankapuri, his capital in Sri Lanka. He got Lankapuri as a gift from Shiva and he was developing it. When Vyasa came to the city, Ravana asked him, 'Oh Vyasa, did you see my palace, and my country? How grand they look.' Vyasa replied, 'Yes, I have seen them.'

Ravana showed him everything with pride and asked, 'Why don't you build a house for yourself?'

Vyasa smiled and said, 'My life is just four *kalpas*. I have no time to waste building houses. After all, I am going to live here for only four *kalpas*, why should I waste time building houses?'

Ravana lived for only one *kalpa*, for which he built such a big house. Vyasa whose life was four times as long, thought it was unnecessary to waste part of his life building houses! 'One who is not concerned about owning a house is full of devotion and he is near to Me, dear to Me.' Krishna concludes this chapter on *Bhakti Yoga*, Union through Devotion, saying that one who lives in righteousness is devoted to Him.

Dharma is spiritual righteousness. It is not, and has nothing to do with rules and regulations laid down by society and religion. Human tendency is always to break rules. If there is a speed restriction, the driver will speed, especially when he feels there is no cop around. Rules, especially societal rules, seem to restrict one's freedom of expression and movement. Rules are always needed for others but not for us.

Religious rules and commandments are even worse. They are based on principles of greed and fear and designed to control, totally control. Unlike societal leaders, religious leaders know that they have no constitutional powers to control. Therefore, they must devise subtler techniques of control. So they came up with the concept of sins. Along with sins, religions created heaven and hell.

Understand that you are no sinner! Divinity resides within us. Our only sin, the original sin, is in not recognizing that we are divine. Therefore we don't need to strive to attain salvation. We just need to become aware of our inner divinity. In Hindu scriptures, spiritual truths are called *yama* and comprise the following: *satya*, *ahimsā*, *asteya*, *aparigraha* and *brahmacarya*. These are not very different from the Ten Commandments.

Satya is truth. It is truth in thoughts, words and action. What is inside is shown outside. Truth can only be expressed when one is living in awareness in the present, when mind and ego are disengaged, when whatever is felt is expressed without being filtered by the ego.

Ahimsā is non-violence, again in thought, words and action. *Ahimsā* arises from the realization of the cosmic consciousness, that we are one with the universe, that

we are one with every being in this universe. When this realization dawns, what 'other' exists to harm? Violence dissolves and compassion blossoms.

Asteya is not coveting, not just possessions but qualities, attention and the like. It is to realize one's own uniqueness in the context of the cosmic consciousness, and to realize that Existence is showering equally and uniquely on all of us. So then what need is there to seek what is rightfully someone else's? Just decide: What Existence gives them is good for them and what Existence bestows upon me is best for me and my overall expansion.

Aparigraha means to live simply and minimally within one's needs and not to develop and chase desires based on greed.

Brahmacharya is living in and with reality. This word is often translated incorrectly as celibacy. What it actually means is to drop one's fantasies, illusions and expectations about life and oneself. It means living with spontaneity and intelligence in the present moment.

In this day and age it is humanly impossible to follow these ideals implicitly. *Sanyāsīs* who take these vows have a tough time fulfilling them. For those in day-to-day material life, these are almost impossible to achieve.

In my experience, I would say that these rules of *yama*, of spiritual conduct, are a product of enlightenment and not a path to enlightenment. In this modern age, the path of righteousness that Krishna talks about leading to Him, is the path of meditation. When we follow meditation, one automatically gets into the virtuous circle of conscious awareness that takes us to Krishna consciousness.

Meditation is a process of shutting the mind down. In this process of reaching the no-mind state, the ego drops. The barrier to the realization that our true nature is divine disappears. We become who we are. We realize we are one with the Divine.

Q: How does one let go of attachment? It seems inseparable from living.

When I stay at devotees' homes, they ask me, 'Swamiji, did you sleep well in this new place?' I tell them, 'Only when you have attachment to a house, does another house become a new place and you struggle. When you don't have an attachment to any house, you feel at home wherever you go!'

Our ashram records show that I visited 1,200 homes during the last two years. In India, each day I used to visit forty homes. I have stayed in hundreds of homes around the world, but I have never felt that a place is new. I feel totally at home anywhere.

People ask me on the following day, ‘*Swamiji* did you sleep well? Are you comfortable?’

I say, ‘What is there in this? If I stretch my hand out, I get food. If I stretch my leg out, I sleep, that’s all!’ That’s life. There is nothing else. If you don’t feel attached to one home, you feel at home in the entire world. You are totally relaxed anywhere in the world.

People ask me, ‘*Swamiji*, how can you travel continuously?’ This question comes from people who travel for business. They say, ‘If we go to one or two places and come back, it takes one week to recover, to settle down again and get back to our routine, our life, for us to feel comfortable, to feel ourselves. How can you travel continuously?’ I stay for a maximum of one week in any place. Now, because we have an *ashram* here, I have been staying for more than a week. Otherwise, never more than a week.

The secret is not feeling connected to one house. Then you will feel connected to the whole world. You will have a deep feeling of being at home with the whole world. Wherever you go, you will experience a deep, relaxed bliss and ecstasy. As Krishna says here, ‘One who does not care for any house, such a man full of devotion is very dear to Me.’ When one is not fixed in a physical location, only then one can be fixed in mind.

When people asked Ramana Maharishi to suggest a form of meditation, he advised them to walk around the Arunachala Hill and focus on the Hill. They wondered, ‘Why is he saying this? How can we meditate while walking? All meditations must be done while sitting cross-legged with eyes closed.’

No. Understand, when the body is moving, it is easier to keep the mind stationary. In our *cakra* energization programs, the Life Bliss Programs, we have a meditation on the *visuddhi*, the throat *cakra*. This meditation involves active movement, actually running, while keeping the mind focused on the *visuddhi cakra*. This is a powerful meditation that infuses energy. It is easier to focus with the mind if the body is moving.

When one is truly in the present, when one is aware, when one’s consciousness is awake, there can be no duality. Our self merges with the Self; we are one with

the Divine. Everyone is us. Then where is the question of friends and enemies? We are one with nature. Where is the question of feeling hot and cold? When we are one with the universe, when all is the same, where is the question of feeling honor or dishonor, from whom to whom and by whom? The experience and the experiencer become the same. The expression and the experience become the same. Krishna takes us into that state, the state of Krishna consciousness, being one with Him, the Divine, where all these dualities merge.

Q Swamiji, if every waking and sleeping is akin to birth and death, and at the time of birth if we create an earthly life, does it mean that each awakening after sleep is an opportunity for a new life in our current form?

Yes, everyday is an opportunity to transform your body and mind. Let me tell you clearly, you can even transform your body! Not only the mind, even your body, because your body is created by your mind. Everyday is an opportunity given to us to transform our lives. Every sleep is death, every awakening is birth; it is *janana* and *marana*, birth and death. Everyday is an opportunity for us to transform our lives.

At the point of awakening, when your subtle body settles into your gross body, the thoughts that arise in your mind are the attitude that develops and determines your mood and action for the rest of the day. When you wake up in the morning, as you wake up, when you are still in bed, run your hands over your body from the top of your head to tips of your toes. As your hands feel the top of your head, say to yourself that you have a lovely head with wonderful hair. Do not worry about whether you do have or your perception of whether you believe you have. Just do it. Then offer gratitude to the universe for giving you such a lovely head and wonderful hair. This way, run through your entire body down to your feet and toes, feeling and offering gratitude for every part of your body.

This whole exercise may take ten minutes. It is a powerful meditation technique that not only determines your mood for the day, but also infuses a strong self-image and love for yourself. This translates into love for others. Yes, each awakening can transform your life, if you allow it to and you know how.

Let us pray to the ultimate energy, *Parabrahma* Krishna, to make us all experience the truths of *Bhakti Yoga*, that love is our very life. Let us pray to Him to give us

the conscious experience of *bhakti*, devotional love, and make us experience and radiate eternal bliss, *nityānanda*.

Thank You.

*Thus ends the 12th chapter named **Bhakti Yogaḥ** of the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad Gita, the scripture of Yoga, dealing with the science of the Absolute in the form of the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna.*

Bhagavad**Gita**

Verses



Invocation Verses

> nñVñP à{V~ñYVñ^JdVmZnam UZ ñd`\$
i`ngZ J(WVññamU_ñZm_Ü`o_hm^naV\$
AÜVm_Vd{fUt ^JdVt AññKenÜ`ñ`Zt
Aâ~ Ed_ZñYXYñ_ ^JdXñrVo^dÜfUt

*Om pārthāya pratibodhitām bhagavatā nārāyaṇena svayaṁ
vyāseṇa grahitām purāṇa muninā madhye mahābhārataṁ ।
advaitāmṛtavarṣiṇīm bhagavatīm aṣṭādaśadhyāyinīm
amba tvām anusandadhāmi bhagavadgīte bhavadveṣiṇīm ॥*

Om, I meditate upon you, Bhagavad Gita the affectionate Mother, the Divine Mother showering the nectar of non duality and destroying rebirth, (who was) incorporated into the Mahabharata of eighteen chapters by sage Vyasa, the author of the purāṇas and imparted to Arjuna by Lord Narayana, Himself.

dñgKdñW\$XñdH\$ñgMñUñ_XZ_2&
XñdH\$na_mZYX\$H\$UñdYXñOJÜñ_2&&

*vasudeva sutaṁ devaṁ kamsa cāṇūra mardanaṁ ।
devakī paramānandaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ vande jagad guruṁ ॥*

I salute you Lord Krishna, Teacher to the world, son of Vasudeva, supreme bliss of Devaki, destroyer of Kamsa and Chaanura

Verses Of Gita Chapter - 7

AW g8V_00`n :

kmZ{dkmZ`mJ :

Jñānavijñāna Yogaḥ

I r ^JdmZdmV&

_æ`ng°\$ _Zm nmV© mJ\$`ÄÖY`XmI` : &

Ag\$`\$g_ J\$`n\$` Wm kmn` {g VÄN&Jm&& 7.1

śrī bhagavān uvāca

mayyāsaktamanāḥ pārtha yogaṁ yuñjan madāśrayaḥ |

asaṁśayaṁ samagraṁ mām yathā jñāsyasi tacchṛṇu || 7.1

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Krishna said; *mayi:* in Me; *āsaktamanāḥ:* mind attached; *pārtha:* Arjuna, O son of Pritha; *yogaṁ:* union; *yuñjan:* so practicing; *mad āśrayaḥ:* in My shelter; *asaṁśayaṁ:* without doubt; *samagraṁ:* completely; *mām:* to Me; *yathā:* how, in what manner; *jñāsyasi:* you can know; *tat:* that; *śṛṇu:* hear

7.1 Krishna says, Arjuna, Listen to Me, you can know Me completely and without doubt by practicing yoga in true consciousness of Me, with your mind attached to Me.

kmZ\$Veh\$g{dkmZ{X\$du`mā`eFV: &

`ÄknEdmZm ^j mJ` ÄknVî`_d(eî`Vo&& 7.2

jñānaṁ te 'haṁ savijñānamidaṁ vakṣyāmy aśeṣataḥ |

yaj jñātvā ne 'ha bhūyo 'nyaj jñātavyam avaśiṣyate || 7.2

jñānaṁ: phenomenal knowledge; *te:* unto you; *ahaṁ:* I; *sa:* with; *vijñānaṁ:* absolute knowledge; *idaṁ:* this; *vakṣyāmi:* shall explain; *aśeṣataḥ:* in full; *yat:* which; *jñātvā:* knowing; *na:* not; *iha:* in this world; *bhūyaḥ:* further; *anyat:* anything more; *jñātavyaṁ:* knowable; *avaśiṣyate:* remains to be known

7.2 Let Me explain to you in detail this phenomenal and absolute knowledge along with its realization; by knowing which, there shall remain nothing further to be known.

_Zñ` mUn\$ghòrfwH\$üÜV{V {gÕ` o`
 `VVm_{n {gÕmZñ\$H\$üÜ`_ñdñmVñdV: && 7.3

manuṣyāṇāṁ sahasreṣu kaścīd yatati siddhaye |
yatatāmapī siddhānāṁ kaścīn mām vetti tattvataḥ || 7.3

manuṣyāṇāṁ: of men; *sahasreṣu*: out of many thousands; *kaścīd*: hardly one; *yatati*: endeavors; *siddhaye*: for perfection of self-realization; *yatatām*: of those so endeavoring; *apī*: indeed; *siddhānāṁ*: of those who have achieved perfection; *kaścīd*: hardly one; *mām*: Me; *veti*: does know; *tattvataḥ*: in truth

7.3 Out of many thousands of men, hardly one endeavors or strives to achieve perfection of self-realization; of those so endeavoring, hardly one achieves the perfection of self-realization and of those, hardly one knows Me in truth or reaches that state of oneness with Me.

^f_ammñZbñdñ w | \$_Zñ~(Öad M`
 Ahññm BVr`\$_o{^pm`àH\$Vair`Ym`&& 7.4

bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ khaṁ mano buddhir eva ca |
ahaṁkāra itī 'yaṁ me bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā || 7.4

bhūmiḥ: earth; *āpaḥ*: water; *analah*: fire; *vāyuḥ*: air; *khaṁ*: ether; *manah*: mind; *buddhiḥ*: intelligence; *eva*: certainly; *ca*: and; *ahaṁkāraḥ*: ego; *itī*: thus; *yaṁ*: all these; *me*: My; *bhinnā*: separated, various; *prakṛtiḥ*: external energies; *aṣṭadhā*: total eight

7.4 Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego all together these eight constitute My separated external energies.

Anaò {_VñEdY`ñ\$àH\$V {d{Ö _onam`²`
 Ord^Vñ\$hm`nhm``\$Ym`PñOJV²`&& 7.5

apare 'yaṁ itas tvanyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām |
jī vabhūtāṁ mahābāho yaye 'daṁ dhāryate jagat || 7.5

aparā: inferior; *yaṁ*: this; *itaḥ*: besides this; *tu*: but; *anyāṁ*: another; *prakṛtiṁ*: energy; *viddhi*: understand; *me*: my; *parām*: superior; *jīvabhūtāṁ*: the living entities; *mahā-bāho*: O

mighty armed one; *yayā*: by whom; *idaṁ*: this; *dhāryate*: being utilized or exploited; *jagat*: the material world

7.5 Besides these external energies, which are inferior in nature, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine. This comprises all the embodied souls of all the living entities by which this material world is being utilized or exploited.

EVŪmṛ{Z ^Vn{Z gdnṬrĒ`mYm` &
Ah\$HĒgñ` OJV: à^d: àb`ñVWm && 7.6

etad yonīni bhūtāni sarvāṇi 'tyupadhāraya |
aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā || 7.6

etad: these two natures; *yonī ni*: source of birth; *bhūtāni*: everything created; *sarvāṇi*: all; *iti*: thus; *upadhāraya*: know; *aham*: I; *kṛtsnasya*: all-inclusive; *jagataḥ*: of the world; *prabhavaḥ*: source of manifestation; *pralayaḥ*: annihilation; *tathā*: as well as

7.6 Know for certain that everything living is manifested by these two energies of Mine. I am the Creator, the Sustainer and the Destroyer of them.

_Îm naVa\$Znġ` pĒH\$#mXpñV YZÄO` &
{` gdĒXSàñV\$gyġo{UJUmbd && 7.7

mattaḥ parataram nā 'nyat kiṁcid asti dhanāñjaya |
mayi sarvam idaṁ protaṁ sūtre maṇigaṇā iva || 7.7

mattaḥ: beyond Myself; *parataram*: superior; *na*: not; *anyat kiṁcit*: anything else; *asti*: there is; *dhanāñjaya*: O conqueror of wealth; *mayi*: in Me; *sarvam*: all that be; *idaṁ*: which we see; *protam*: strung; *sūtre*: on a thread; *maṇigaṇāḥ*: pearls; *iva*: likened

7.7 O conqueror of wealth [Arjuna], there is no truth superior to Me. Everything hangs upon Me, as pearls are strung on a thread.

agnēh_ḥḡwHṣṣVô à^npñ_e(egj)©no V&
àUd: gddXfweāX: I onnpf\$Zfw&& 7.8

raso 'ham apsu kaunteya prabhā 'smi śaśisūryayoḥ |
praṇavaḥ sarvavedeṣu śabdaḥ khe pauruṣaṁ nṛṣu || 7.8

rasaḥ: taste; ahaṁ: I; apsu: in water; kaunteya: O son of Kunti; prabhā asmi: I am the light; śaśisūryayoḥ: in the sun and the moon; praṇavaḥ: the letters a-u-m; sarva: in all; vedeṣu: in the Vedas; śabdaḥ: sound vibration; khe: in the ether; pauruṣaṁ: virility, manliness; nṛṣu: in man

7.8 O son of Kunti [Arjuna], I am the taste of water, the radiance of the sun and the moon, the sacred syllable 'Om' in the vedic mantras. I am the sound in ether and ability in man.

nñi`noJY: nñWi`n\$M VÖümpñ_{d^mdgmp V&
OrdZ\$gd©VfVnÜmpñ_Vnpñdfw&& 7.9

punyo gandhaḥ pṛthivyām ca tejaś cā 'smi vibhāvasau |
jīvanaṁ sarva bhūteṣu tapaś cā 'smi tapasviṣu || 7.9

punyaḥ: original; gandhaḥ: fragrance; pṛthivyām: in the earth; ca: also; tejaḥ: temperature; ca: also; asmi: I am; vibhāvasau: in the fire; jīvanaṁ: life; sarva: all; bhūteṣu: living entities; tapaḥ: penance; ca: also; asmi: I am; tapasviṣu: in those who practice penance.

7.9 I am the original fragrance of the earth, and I am the heat in fire. I am the life of all living beings, and I am the penances of all ascetics.

~rO\$_n\$gd©VnZñ{d{Ö nmV©gZm/Z_2V&
~(Ö~(Ö_Vm_pñ_VÖñVÖpñdZm_h_2V&& 7.10

bījaṁ māṁ sarvabhūtānāṁ viddhi pārtha sanātanaṁ |
buddhir buddhimatām asmi tejas tejasvinām aham || 7.10

bījaṁ: the seed; māṁ: Me; sarva bhūtānāṁ: of all living entities; viddhi: try to understand; pārtha: O son of Pritha; sanātanaṁ: original, eternal; buddhiḥ: intelligence; buddhimatām: of the intelligent; asmi: I am; tejaḥ: prowess; tejasvinām: of the powerful; ahaṁ: I am

7.10 O son of Pritha, I am the eternal source of all creatures, the intelligence of the intelligent, and the brilliance of all those who are brilliant.

~bš~bdVm_pñ_ H\$ñ_amJ{dd{OŸ_²&
Y_mŸÉŌm^VŸfwH\$ñ_mñ_ ^aVf© && 7.11

balam balavatām asmi kāma rāga vivarjitam ।
dharmā viruddho bhūteṣu kāmō 'smi bharata ṛṣabha ॥ 7.11

balam: strength; balavatām: of the strong; asmi: I am; kāma: procreative energy; rāga: attachment; vivarjitam: devoid of; dharmā viruddhaḥ: not against the religious principles; bhūteṣu: in all beings; kāmāḥ: lust; asmi: I am; bharata ṛṣabha: O lord of the Bharatas

7.11 I am the strength of the strong, and I am procreative energy in living beings, devoid of lust and in accordance with religious principles, O lord of the Bharata.

`oMpd gnpīdH\$ñ^ndmanOgnñVm_gmü `o&
ÎmEdŸV VnpŸd{Ō Z Êdh\$VŸfwVo{` && 7.12

ye cai 'va sātṭvikā bhā vā rājasās tāmasās ca ye ।
matta eve 'ti tāt viddhi na tvahaṁ teṣu te mayi ॥ 7.12

ye: all those; ca: and; eva: certainly; sātṭvikāḥ: in goodness; bhā vāḥ: states of being; rājasāḥ: mode of passion; tāmasāḥ: mode of ignorance; ca: and; ye: although; mattaḥ: from Me; eva: certainly; iti: thus; tāt: those; viddhi: try to know; na: not; tu: but; ahaṁ: I; teṣu: in those; te: they; mayi: unto Me

7.12 All states of being - be they of goodness, passion or ignorance - all emanate from Me. I am independent of them but they are dependent on Me.

{Î{^JŸ_`_ñŸŸŸ^: gdŸX\$ŸJV²&
_ñŸhV\$ZñŸ^ŸmZñŸV_m_ä` : na_î`_²&& 7.13

tribhir guṇamayair bhā vair ebhiḥ sarvam idaṁ jagat ।
mohitaṁ nā 'bhijānāti mām ebhyaḥ param avyayam ॥ 7.13

tribhiḥ: three; *guṇamayaiḥ*: by the three gunas; *bhā vaiḥ*: state of being; *ebhiḥ*: all these; *sarvaṁ*: the whole world; *idaṁ*: this; *jagat*: universe; *mohitaṁ*: deluded; *na abhijānāti*: do not know; *mām*: Me; *ebhyaḥ*: above these; *paraṁ*: the Supreme; *avyayaṁ*: immutable

7.13 The whole world is deluded by the three modes (goodness, passion and ignorance), and thus does not know Me. I am above the modes and unchangeable

Xp̄r 0f̄mJW_`r __m̄mXm̄E`m̄
_m̄d`oànÚVVo_m̄m̄Vn̄gVap̄V Vo 7.14

daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī mama māyā duratyayā ।
mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etām taranti te ॥ 7.14

daivī: transcendental; *hi*: certainly; *eṣā*: this; *guṇamayī*: consisting of the three modes of material nature; *mama*: My; *māyā*: energy; *duratyayā*: very difficult to overcome; *mām*: unto Me; *eva*: certainly; *ye*: those; *prapadyante*: surrender; *māyām etām*: this illusory energy; *taranti*: overcome; *te*: they

7.14 My divine energy, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who surrender unto Me can cross beyond it with ease.

Z_n̄gXm̄H̄gVZm̄T̄m̄ ànÚVVoZam̄V_m̄
_m̄`mn̄öVkn̄Zm̄Angm̄S^nd_n̄I Vm̄ 7.15

na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ prapadyante narādhamaḥ ।
māyayā 'pahṛtajñānā āsurāṁ bhāvam āśritāḥ ॥ 7.15

na: not; *mām*: unto Me; *duṣkṛtinaḥ*: miscreants; *mūḍhāḥ*: foolish; *prapadyante*: surrender; *nara adhamāḥ*: lowest among mankind; *māyayā*: by the illusory energy; *apahṛta*: stolen by illusion; *jñānāḥ*: knowledge; *āsurāṁ*: demonic; *bhāvaṁ*: nature; *āśritāḥ*: accepting.

7.15 Those miscreants who are foolish, lowest among mankind, whose knowledge is stolen by māyā (that which is not real), and who have taken shelter in demonic nature, do not surrender unto Me.

MVdYm^OYVo_nSOZm gMhVZnOZ &
AnVnj{OkngmWmWu knZr M ^aVf® && 7.16

caturvidhā bhajante mām janāḥ sukṛtino 'rjuna |
ārto jijñāsur arthārthī jñānī ca bharatarṣabha || 7.16

caturvidhāḥ: four kinds of; *bhajante*: render services; *mām*: unto Me; *janāḥ*: persons; *sukṛtinaḥ*: those who are pious; *arjuna*: O Arjuna; *ārtaḥ*: the distressed; *jijñāsuḥ*: the inquisitive; *arthārthī*: one who desires material gain; *jñānī*: one who knows things as they are; *ca*: also; *bharata ṛṣabha*: O great one amongst the descendants of Bharata.

7.16 O best among the Bharata, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me. They are: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and those searching for knowledge of the Absolute.

VfngknZr {ZÈ`~®\$EH\$^{°\$d{eî`Vo&
{à`m{h knZZnOZ`Wch\$g M __ {à`: && 7.17

teṣāṁ jñānī nityayukta ekabhaktir viśiṣyate |
priyo hi jñānino 'tyartham ahaṁ sa ca mama priyaḥ || 7.17

teṣāṁ: of them; *jñānī*: the wise; *nitya yuktaḥ*: ever steadfast; *eka bhaktiḥ*: whose devotion is to the one; *viśiṣyate*: better; *priyaḥ*: dear; *hi*: verily; *jñāninaḥ*: of the wise; *atyartham*: exceedingly; *ahaṁ*: I; *saḥ*: he; *ca*: and; *mama*: to me; *priyaḥ*: dear

7.17 Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge and ever united with Me through single-minded devotion is the best. I am very dear to him, and he is dear to Me

CXnam gdEdVoknZrEdnE_d_o_V_2V&
AnpñVWV: g {h`®\$E_m_m_cdnZm_n\$J{V_2V&& 7.18

udārāḥ sarva evai 'te jñānī tv ātmai 'va me matam |
āsthitaḥ sa hi yuktātmā mām evā 'nuttamām gatim || 7.18

udārāḥ: noble; *sarve*: all; *eva*: certainly; *ete*: these; *jñānī*: one who is in knowledge; *tu*: but; *ātmā eva*: just like Myself; *me*: My; *matam*: opinion; *āsthitaḥ*: situated; *saḥ*: he; *hi*: certainly; *yuktātmā*: engaged in devotional service; *mām*: unto Me; *eva*: certainly; *anuttamām*: the highest goal; *gatim*: destination

7.18 All these devotees are indeed noble; one who knows Me, dwells in Me. Being engaged in My mission, he attains Me.

~hŷnŝOŷ_Zm_YVokmZdmŷ_nŝanÚVoŷ
dmŷKd: gdŷ{V g_hnŷ_mgKbŷ: ॥ 7.19

bahūnām janmanām ante jñānavān mām prapadyate |
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti sa mahātmā sudurlabhaḥ || 7.19

bahūnām: many; *janmanām*: births; *ante*: after; *jñānavān*: he possessing knowledge; *mām*: unto Me; *prapadyate*: surrenders; *vāsudevaḥ*: cause of all causes; *sarvam*: all; *iti*: thus; *saḥ*: such; *mahātmā*: great soul; *sudurlabhaḥ*: very rare.

7.19 After many births and deaths, he who knows Me surrenders to Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare.

Hŝm_ñVñVpVkmZm_ànÚVŷŷ_XdVm_ŷ
VŝVŝ{Z`__mñVm_àHŝŷ`m{Z`Vm_ñd`m_ŷ 7.20

kāmais tais-tair hṛtajñānāḥ prapadyante 'nyadevatāḥ |
taṁtaṁ niyamam āsthāya prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā || 7.20

kāmaiḥ: by desires; *taiḥ*: by those; *taiḥ*: by those; *hṛta*: distorted; *jñānāḥ*: knowledge; *prapadyante*: surrender; *anya*: other; *devatāḥ*: deities; *taṁ-taṁ*: that; *niyamam*: rules; *āsthāya*: following; *prakṛtyā*: by nature; *niyatāḥ*: controlled; *svayā*: by their own.

7.20 Those whose discrimination has been distorted by various desires, surrender unto deities. They follow specific rules and regulations of worship according to their own nature.

`no`no`nŝ`nŝVZŷ^°ŝ: | Ō`mMŷŷ_ÀNŷV_ŷ
Vñ` Vñ`nMbŝŷ| ŌŝVm_d {dXYmā`h_²ŷ 7.21

yo-yo yām-yām tanuṁ bhaktaḥ śraddhayā 'rcitum icchati |
tasya-tasyā 'calām śraddhām tām eva vidadhāmyaham || 7.21

yaḥ: that; *yaḥ*: that; *yām*: which; *yām*: which; *tanuṃ*: form of the deities; *bhaktāḥ*: devotee; *śraddhayā*: with faith; *arcitum*: to worship; *icchatī*: desires; *tasya*: of that; *tasya*: of that; *acalām*: steady; *śraddhām*: faith; *tām*: him; *eva*: surely; *vidadhāmi*: give; *ahaṃ*: I

7.21 *I am in everyone's heart as the super soul. As soon as one desires to worship some deity, I make his faith steady so that he can devote himself to that particular deity.*

g V`m I Ō`m` ʔ\$ñVñ` nanY/Z_rhVoV&
b^VoM VV: H\$m_ný`_p{d(hVnpVh VnzZ`&& 7.22

sa tayā śraddhayā yuktaś tasyā 'rādhanaṃ ī hate |
labhate ca tataḥ kāmān mayai 'va vihitān hi tān || 7.22

saḥ: he; *tayā*: with that; *śraddhayā*: with faith; *yuktaḥ*: endowed; *tasya*: his; *ārādhanaṃ*: worship; *ī hate*: endeavors; *labhate*: obtains; *ca*: and; *tataḥ*: from which; *kāmān*: desires; *mayā*: by Me; *eva*: alone; *vihitān*: bestowed; *hi*: for; *tān*: those.

7.22 *Endowed with such a faith, he endeavors to worship a particular demigod and obtains his desires; In reality, these benefits are granted by Me alone.*

A'Vdîm\sb\$Vfñ\$VØdĒ`ën_Ygm_&
Xoln'Xol`Ono`npV_Ø°\$m`npV_m_{n`&& 7.23

antavat tu phalaṃ teṣāṃ tad bhavaty alpamedhasām |
devān devayajo yānti madbhaktā yānti mām api || 7.23

antavat tu: limited and temporary; *phalaṃ*: fruits; *teṣāṃ*: their; *tat*: that; *bhavatī*: becomes; *alpa medhasām*: of those of small intelligence; *devān*: demigods' planets; *devayajaḥ*: worshipers of demigods; *yānti*: achieve; *mad*: My; *bhaktāḥ*: devotees; *yānti*: attain; *mām*: to Me; *api*: surely

7.23 *Men of limited intelligence worship the demigods and their fruits are limited and temporary. Those who worship the demigods go only to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees reach My supreme planet.*

Aī`°\$i`{\$_mnp\$`Ÿ`ŸVo_m_~Ÿ` : &
 na\$^nd_OmZŸVno__m` ``_ZŸm_`²&& 7.24

avyaktam vyaktim āpannam manyante mām abuddhayaḥ ।
 param bhāvam ajānanto mamā 'vyayam anuttamam ॥ 7.24

avyaktam: nonmanifested; vyaktim: personality; āpannam: achieved; manyante: think; mām: unto Me; abuddhayaḥ: less intelligent persons; param: supreme; bhāvam: state of being; ajānantaḥ: without knowing; mama: My; avyayam: imperishable; anuttamam: the finest.

7.24 Unintelligent men, who do not know Me perfectly, think that I, the supreme personality of godhead, the **Bhagavān**, who was impersonal before, have become a human being now. They do not know that I am imperishable and supreme, even when I assume the body.

Znh\$āH\$ne: gdŸ` `nol_m`ng_nclV: &
 _j`p`\$Zn`^OmZn(V bnH\$no_m_O_ī` ``_²&& 7.25

nā 'ham prakāśaḥ sarvasya yogamāyāsamāvṛtaḥ ।
 mūḍho 'yaṁ nā 'bhijānāti loko mām ajam avyayam ॥ 7.25

na: nor; aham: I; prakāśaḥ: manifest; sarvasya: to everyone; yoga māyā: internal potency; samāvṛtaḥ: covered; mūḍhaḥ: foolish; ayaṁ: this; na: not; abhijānāti: can understand; lokaḥ: such less intelligent persons; mām: Me; ajam: unborn; avyayam: immutable.

7.25 I am never revealed to the foolish and unintelligent, covered as I am by My divine power; the ignorant do not know Me, unborn and eternal.

dXnh\$g_VrVn(Z dV`mZn(Z MmOŸ &
 ^{dī`n(U M ^jVn(Z _n\$VwdX Z H\$ūZ && 7.26

vedā 'ham samatītāni vartamānāni cā 'rjuna ।
 bhaviṣyāni ca bhūtāni mām tu veda na kaścana ॥ 7.26

veda: know; aham: I; sama: equally; atī tāni: past; vartamānāni: present; ca: and; arjuna: O Arjuna; bhaviṣyāni: future; ca: also; bhūtāni: living entities; mām: Me; tu: but; veda: knows; na: not; kaścana: anyone

7.26 O Arjuna, as the supreme personality of Godhead, I know all that has happened, all that is happening, and all that is to happen. I also know all living entities; but no one knows Me.

BANafg_ñwZ ÚYÜ_nhz ^naV ð
gd®Vn(Z g§_nhsJ)`nóV naíVn ð& 7.27

icchā dveṣa samutthena dvandva mohena bhārata ।
sarva bhūtāni saṁmohaṁ sarge yānti paramtapa ॥ 7.27

icchā: desire; *dveṣa*: hate; *samutthena*: born; *dvandva*: duality; *mohena*: overcome; *bhārata*: O scion of Bharata; *sarva*: all; *bhūtāni*: living entities; *saṁmoham*: into delusion; *sarge*: in creation; *yānti*: go; *paramtapa*: O conqueror of enemies.

7.27 O scion of Bharata [Arjuna], O conqueror of the foe, all living entities are born into delusion, overcome by the dualities of attachment and aversion.

VoÜÜÜ nñ/Z P\$ñ ^OíVo ññTðk/m & 7.28

yeṣāṁ tv antagatāṁ pāpaṁ janānāṁ puṇyakarmaṇām ।
te dvandvamohanirmuktā bhajante mām drdhavratāḥ ॥ 7.28

yeṣāṃ: whose; *tu*: but; *antagatāṃ*: completely eradicated; *pāpāṃ*: sin; *janānām*: of the persons; *punya*: pious; *karmanām*: previous activities; *te*: they; *dvandva*: duality; *moha*: delusion; *nir muktāḥ*: free from; *bhajante*: worship; *mām*: Me; *dr̥ḍha vratāḥ*: with determination.

7.28 Persons who have acted virtuously, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated and who are freed from the duality of reality and unreality, engage themselves in My worship with firm resolve.

Oam_aU_nj m̄ _m n(I È` ` Vp/V ` o&
Vo~<= V{ÔUw HfĒZ Ü` nĒ \$H\$ ©Mm I b ²&& 7.29

jarā maraṇa mokṣāya mām āśritya yatanti ye ।
te brahma tad viduḥ kṛtsnam adhyātmaṁ karma cā 'khilam ॥ 7.29

jarā: old age; *maraṇa*: death; *mokṣāya*: for the purpose of liberation; *mām*: unto Me; *āśritya*: taking shelter of; *yatanti*: endeavor; *ye*: all those; *te*: such persons; *brahma*: Brahman; *tat*: actually that; *viduḥ*: they know; *kṛtsnam*: everything; *adhyātmaṁ*: transcendental; *karma*: activities; *ca*: and; *akhilān*: entirely

7.29 Persons who are striving for liberation from the cycle of birth, old age and death, take refuge in Me. They are actually Brahman because they comprehend everything about activities that transcend these.

gmY^jmfYXp\$ _n\$gmY` k\$M `o{dXw ॥
à`nUH\$nbœ{n M _n\$Vo{dXw P\$MNg: ॥ 7.30

sādhībhūtādhidaivam mām sādhiyajñam ca ye viduḥ |
prayāṇakāle 'pi ca mām te vidur yuktacetasaḥ || 7.30

sādhībhūta: the governing principle of the material manifestation; *adhidaivam*: underlying all the demigods; *mām*: Me; *sādhiyajñam*: sustaining all sacrifices; *ca*: and; *ye*: those; *viduḥ*: know; *prayāṇa*: of death; *kāle*: at the time; *apī*: even; *ca*: and; *mām*: Me; *te*: they; *viduḥ*: know; *yukta cetasaḥ*: with steadfast minds.

7.30 Those who know Me as the Supreme Lord, as the governing principle of the material manifestation, who know Me as the one underlying all the demigods and as the one sustaining all sacrifices, can with steadfast mind, understand and know Me, even at the time of death.

B{V I r_ØJdØrVmgn{ZfĒgw~«-{dÚmì n\$`nolemóo
I rH\$U nDĒg\$hnKoknZ{dknZ`nolnoZm_gBV_nœU`mì : ॥ 2Ÿ

iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām
yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde jñānavijñāna yogo nāma
saptamo'dhyāyaḥ ||

In the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the seventh discourse designated:

Jñānavijñāna Yogaḥ

Verses Of Gita Chapter - 8

AW Aīṁ m̐ :

Aj a~ṁ m̐ :

Akṣarabrahma Yogah

AOṀ Cdm &

qH\$ VX²~ṁ {H\$_Ü`nē_\$qH\$ H\$_ṁfñm_ &

A{Y^v\$M qH\$ ānṁ_{YXp\$H\$_ā`Vo& 8.1

arjuna uvāca

*kiṁ tad brahma kim adhyātmaṁ kiṁ karma puruṣottama ।
adhibhūtaṁ ca kiṁ proktaṁ adhidaivaṁ kim ucyate ॥ 8.1*

arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; *kiṁ:* what; *tat:* that; *brahma:* Brahman; *kiṁ:* what; *adhyātmaṁ:* the self; *kiṁ:* what; *karma:* fruitive activities; *puruṣottama:* O Supreme Person; *adhibhūtaṁ:* the material manifestation; *ca:* and; *kiṁ:* what; *proktaṁ:* is called; *adhidaivaṁ:* the demigods; *kiṁ:* what; *ucyate:* is called.

8.1 Arjuna said: O my Lord, O supreme person, what is Brahman? What is the Self? What are result-based actions? What is this material manifestation? And what are the demigods? Please explain all this to me.

A{Y`k: H\$W\$ H\$ṁl Xhpn`_Y`YgXZ &

ā`nUH\$bm H\$W\$skō nē{g {Z`Vnē_{^: & 8.2

*adhiyajñah katham ko 'tra dehe 'smin madhusūdana ।
prayānakāle ca katham jñeyo 'si niyatātmabhiḥ ॥ 8.2*

adhiyajñah: the Lord of sacrifice; *katham:* how; *kaḥ:* who; *atra:* here; *dehe:* in the body; *asmin:* in this; *madhusūdana:* O Madhusudana; *prayānakāle:* at the time of death; *ca:* and; *katham:* how; *jñeyah:* be known; *asi:* You can; *niyatātmabhiḥ:* by the self-controlled.

8.2 How does this Lord of sacrifice live in the body, and in which part does He live, O Madhusudhana? How can those engaged in devotional service know You at the time of their death?

I r ^ J d n Z d n M V &
 A j a s ~ e - n a _ s n d ^ n d n e U ` n e _ A ` V o &
 ^ V ^ n d n O d H s a n (d g J . © H s _ g s k V : & 8.3

śrī bhagavān uvāca

akṣaram brahma paramam svabhāvo 'dhyātmam ucyate |
 bhūtabhāvodbhavakaro visargaḥ karmasamjñitaḥ || 8.3

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Bhagavān said; akṣaram: indestructible; brahma: Brahman; paramam: transcendental; svabhāvaḥ: eternal nature; adhyātmam: the self; ucyate: is called; bhūtabhāva udbhavakaraḥ: action producing the material bodies of the living entities; visargaḥ: creation; karma: fruitive activities; samjñitaḥ: is called.

8.3 Bhagavān said: *The indestructible, transcendental living entity is called Brahman and his eternal nature is called the self. Action pertaining to the development of the material bodies is called karma, or result based activities.*

A { Y ^ V s j a n o ^ n d l : n i e f ü m { Y X p V _ 2 &
 A { Y ^ k n e h _ o d m l X b o X b ^ V n s d a & 8.4

adhibhūtaṁ kṣaro bhāvaḥ puruṣaś cā 'dhidaivatam |
 adhiyajño 'ham evā 'tra dehe dehabhṛtām vara || 8.4

adhibhūtaṁ: the physical manifestation; kṣaraḥ: constantly changing; bhāvaḥ: nature; puruṣaḥ: the universal form; ca: and; dhidaivatam: including all demigods like the sun and moon; adhiyajñaḥ: the Supersoul; aham: I (Krishna); eva: alone; atra: in this; dehe: body; dehabhṛtām: of the embodied; vara: the Supreme.

8.4 Physical nature is known to be endlessly changing. The universe is the cosmic form of the supreme Lord, and I am that Lord represented as the super soul, dwelling in the heart of every being that dwells in a body.

A V H s t b o M _ m _ o l ñ _ a Y _ S E d m H s b o d a _ 2 &
 ` : à ` n { V g _ O m d s ` n { V Z m E ` I g e ` : & 8.5

antakāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram |
 yaḥ prayāti sa madbhāvaṁ yāti nā 'sty atra saṁśayaḥ || 8.5

Aā`ng`ml`PZ M/gmZnY`Jn_ZmV
na_Šnēf\$(X)`\$`mV nmVnZMIV`Z²V 8.8

abhyāsayogayuktena cetasā nā 'nyagāminā |
paramaṁ puruṣaṁ divyaṁ yāti pārthā 'nucintayan || 8.8

abhyāsa: practice; *yoga yuktena*: being engaged in meditation; *cetasā*: by the mind and intelligence; *nā 'nyagāminā*: without their being deviated; *paramaṁ*: the Supreme; *puruṣaṁ*: personality of godhead; *divyaṁ*: transcendental; *yāti*: achieves; *pārtha*: O son of Pritha; *anucintayan*: constantly thinking of

8.8 He who meditates on the supreme person, his mind constantly engaged in remembering Me, not deviating from the path, O Partha, He is sure to reach Me.

H\$gd nmU_ZenfgVna_UnaUr`ng_Zn_aU:
gdfr YmVna_{MYE`ē\$`mXĒ`dUªV_g: nañVmV²V 8.9

kaviṁ purāṇaṁ anuśāsītāram aṇor aṇīyāṁsam anusmared yaḥ |
sarvasya dhātāram acintya rūpaṁ ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt || 8.9

kaviṁ: one who knows everything; *purāṇaṁ*: the oldest; *anuśāsītāram*: the controller; *aṇor*: of the atom; *aṇīyāṁsaṁ*: smaller than; *anusmaret*: always thinking; *yaḥ*: one who; *sarvasya*: of everything; *dhātāram*: the maintainer; *acintya*: inconceivable; *rūpaṁ*: form; *āditya varṇaṁ*: illuminated like the sun; *tamasaḥ*: of the darkness; *parastāt*: transcendental

8.9 One should meditate on the Supreme as the one who knows everything, as He is the oldest, who is the controller, who is smaller than the smallest, who is the maintainer of everything, who is beyond all material conception, who is inconceivable, and who is always a person. He is luminous like the sun and, being transcendental, is beyond this material nature

ā`nUH\$nbO_ZgmMbz ^ŠĒ`m`P\$no`ml~bz Mpd V
^mno_Œ`oāmU_mclō`gā`H\$ g V\$naŠnēf`mV {X}`_Ÿ 8.10

prayānakālē manasā 'calena bhaktyā yukto yogabalena cai 'va |
bhruvor madhye prāṇam āveśya samyak sa taṁ paraṁ puruṣam upaiti divyam || 8.10

prayāṇa kālē: at the time of death; *manasā*: by the mind; *acalena*: without being deviated; *bhaktyā*: in full devotion; *yuktaḥ*: engaged; *yoga balena*: by the power of mystic yoga; *ca*: also; *eva*: certainly; *bhruvoḥ*: between the two eyebrows; *madhye*: in; *prāṇam*: the life air; *āveśya*: establishing; *samyak*: completely; *saḥ*: he; *taṁ*: that; *param*: transcendental; *puruṣam*: personality of godhead; *upaiti*: achieves; *divyam*: in the spiritual kingdom.

8.10 One, who at the time of death, fixes his mind and life air between the eyebrows without being distracted, by the power of yoga and in full devotion, engages himself in dwelling on Me, He will certainly attain Me.

ḥXj a\$cdX{dXmodXpV {depV ḥUV` modrVamUm V&
 ḥ{XAN\$Vmo~M`^aMapV VInonX\$g\$InU àdú` V& 8.11

yad akṣaram vedavido vadanti viśanti yad yatayo vītarāgāḥ |
yad icchanto brahmacaryaṁ caranti tat te padaṁ saṁgrahaṇa
pravakṣye || 8.11

yat: that which; *akṣaram*: inexhaustible; *vedavidaḥ*: a person conversant with the Vedas; *vadanti*: say; *viśanti*: enters; *yat*: in which; *yatayaḥ*: great sages; *vītarāgāḥ*: in the renounced order of life; *yat*: that which; *icchantāḥ*: desiring; *brahmacaryaṁ*: celibacy; *caranti*: practices; *tat*: that; *te*: unto you; *padaṁ*: situation; *saṁgrahaṇa*: in summary; *pravakṣye*: I shall explain.

8.11 Persons who are learned in the Veda and who are great sages in the renounced order, enter into Brahman. Desiring such perfection, one practices brahmacarya. I shall now explain to you this process by which one may attain liberation.

gdΘmanU g\$ ā`_Zmo{X {ZéÜ` M V&
 ḥÜY` m\$M` nE_Z: àmU`npñVVmo`molymaUm_2V& 8.12

sarvadvārāṇi saṁnyamya mano hṛdi nirudhya ca |
mūrdhny ādhāyā 'tmanaḥ prāṇam āsthito yogadhāraṇām || 8.12

sarva dvārāṇi: all the doors of the body; *saṁyamya*: controlling; *manaḥ*: mind; *hr̥di*: in the heart; *nirudhya*: confined; *ca*: also; *mūrdhni*: on the head; *ādhāya*: fixed; *ātmanaḥ*: soul; *prāṇam*: the life air; *āsthitaḥ*: situated; *yoga dhāraṇām*: the yogic situation

8.12 Closing all the doors of the senses and fixing the mind on the heart and the life air at the top of the head, one establishes himself in yoga.

Am̐_Ē`b\$ṅj a\$~«- ī`nhaŸ_m_Zm_aZ²V&
 `: n̐ m̐V Ē`OŸXb\$g `m̐V na_n\$J{V_Ÿ&& 8.13

om ity ekākṣaram brahma vyāharan mām anusmaran |
 yaḥ prayāti tyajan dehaṁ sa yāti paramām gatim || 8.13

om: the combination of letters om (omkara); *iti*: thus; *ekākṣaram*: supreme indestructible; *brahma*: absolute; *vyāharan*: vibrating; *mām*: Me (Krishna); *anusmaran*: remembering; *yaḥ*: anyone; *prayāti*: leaves; *tyajan*: quitting; *dehaṁ*: this body; *saḥ*: he; *yāti*: achieves; *paramām*: supreme; *gatim*: destination

8.13 Centered in this yoga practice and vibrating the sacred syllable OM, the supreme combination of letters, if one dwells in the Supreme and quits his body, he certainly achieves the supreme destination.

AZŸ`Mm gVV\$`m_n\$ñ_a{V {ZĒ`e: V&
 Vñ`nh\$gib^: nmV{ZĒ``P\$ñ` `n̐JZ: V&& 8.14

ananyacetāḥ satatam yo mām smarati nityaśaḥ |
 tasyā 'haṁ sulabhaḥ pārtha nityayuktasya yoginaḥ || 8.14

ananya cetāḥ: without deviation; *satatam*: always; *yaḥ*: anyone; *mām*: Me (Krishna); *smarati*: remembers; *nityaśaḥ*: regularly; *tasya*: to him; *ahaṁ*: I am; *sulabhaḥ*: very easy to achieve; *pārtha*: O son of Pritha; *nitya*: regularly; *yuktasya*: engaged; *yoginaḥ*: of the devotee.

8.14 I am always available to anyone who remembers Me constantly Paarthā, because of his constant engagement in devotional service.

mām upetya punarjanma duḥkhālayam aśāśvatam |
nāpnuvanti mahātmānaḥ saṁsiddhiṁ paramāṁ gatāḥ || 8.15

mām: unto Me; *upetya*: achieving; *punaḥ*: again; *janma*: birth; *duḥkhālayam*: a place of miseries; *aśāśvatam*: temporary; *na*: never; *āpnuvanti*: attain; *mahātmānaḥ*: the great souls; *saṁsiddhiṁ*: perfection; *paramāṁ*: ultimate; *gatāḥ*: achieved.

8.15 After attaining Me, the great souls who are devoted to Me in yoga are never reborn in this world. This world is temporary and full of miseries and they have attained the highest perfection.

ābrahmabhuvanālokāḥ punarāvartino 'rjuna |
mām upetya tu kaunteya punarjanma na vidyate || 8.16

ābrahma: up to the Brahmaloḥka planet; *bhuvanāt*: from the planetary systems; *lokāḥ*: planets; *punarāvartinaḥ*: again returning; *arjuna*: O Arjuna; *mām*: unto Me; *upetya*: arriving; *tu*: but; *kaunteya*: O son of Kunti; *punar janma*: rebirth; *na*: never; *vidyate*: takes to

8.16 From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place. One who reaches My abode, O son of Kunti, is never reborn.

sahasrayugaparyantam ahar yad brahmaṇo viduḥ |
rātriṁ yugasahasrāntām te 'horātravido janāḥ || 8.17

sahasra: thousand; *yuga*: millenniums; *paryantam*: including; *ahaḥ*: day; *yat*: that; *brahmaṇaḥ*: of Brahma; *viduḥ*: they know; *rātriṁ*: night; *yuga*: millenniums; *sahasrāntām*: similarly, at the end of one thousand; *te*: that; *aho rātra*: day and night; *vidaḥ*: understand; *janāḥ*: people

sahasra: thousand; *yuga*: millenniums; *paryantam*: including; *ahaḥ*: day; *yat*: that; *brahmaṇaḥ*: of Brahma; *viduḥ*: they know; *rātriṁ*: night; *yuga*: millenniums; *sahasrāntām*: similarly, at the end of one thousand; *te*: that; *aho rātra*: day and night; *vidaḥ*: understand; *janāḥ*: people

8.17 By human calculation, a thousand ages taken together is the duration of Brahma's one day. His night is just as long.

Àì`°\$X²ì`°\$: gdm@a^dYĒ`hamJ_oĳ
amf`mj_oabr`YVoVlpmi`°\$gkHĳ 8.18

avyaktād vyaktayaḥ sarvāḥ prabhavanti aharāgame |
rātri āgame pralīyante tatrai 'vā 'vyaktasamjñake || 8.18

avyaktāt: from the unmanifest; vyaktayaḥ: living entities; sarvāḥ: all; prabhavanti: come into being; aharāgame: at the beginning of the day; rātri āgame: at the fall of night; pralīyante: are annihilated; tatra: there; eva: certainly; avyakta: the unmanifest; samjñake: called

8.18 From the intangible all living entities come into being at the beginning of Brahma's day. During Brahma's night all that are called intangible are annihilated.

^VJm_ : g Edm \$^fcdm^fcdmabr`Voĳ
amf`mj_ede: nmWqnc^dĒ`hamJ_oĳ 8.19

bhūtagrāmaḥ sa evā 'yaṁ bhūtvā-bhūtvā pralīyate |
rātri āgame 'vaśaḥ pārtha prabhavaty aharāgame || 8.19

bhūta grāmaḥ: the aggregate of all living entities; saḥ: they; eva: certainly; yaṁ: this; bhūtvā bhūtvā : taking birth; pralīyate: annihilate; rātri: night; āgame: on arrival; avaśaḥ: automatically; pārtha: O son of Pritha; prabhavati: manifest; ahar: during daytime; āgame: on arrival.

8.19 Again and again the day comes, and this host of beings is active; and again the night falls, O son of Pritha, and they are automatically annihilated.

nañVñ_mfm^ndmēf`mēi`°\$mēi`°\$ĒgZmVZ:ĳ
` : g gdfm^VfmZī`ĒgmZ {dZī`{V 8.20

paras tasmāt tu bhāvo 'nyo 'vyakto 'vyaktāt sanātanah |
yaḥ sa sarveṣu bhūteṣu naśyatsu na vinaśyati || 8.20

paraḥ: transcendental; *tasmāt*: from that; *tu*: but; *bhāvaḥ*: nature; *anyaḥ*: another; *avyaktaḥ*: unmanifest; *avyaktāt*: from the unmanifest; *sanātanaḥ*: eternal; *yaḥ*: that; *saḥ*: which; *sarveṣu*: all; *bhūteṣu*: manifestation; *naśyatsu*: being annihilated; *na*: never; *vinaśyati*: annihilated.

8.20 *Yet there is another nature, which is eternal and is beyond this tangible and intangible matter. It is supreme and is never annihilated. When all in this world is annihilated, that part remains the same.*

AI`°\$e j a BE`P\$V_nhp na_n\$J{V_2`
`\$anb` Z {ZdVVoVÖm na_\$__ 8.21

avyakto 'kṣara ity uktas tam āhuḥ paramām gatim |
yam prāpya na nivartante tad dhāma paramaṁ mama || 8.21

avyaktaḥ: unmanifested; *akṣaraḥ*: infallible; *iti*: thus; *uktaḥ*: said; *taṁ*: that which; *āhuḥ*: is known; *paramām*: ultimate; *gatim*: destination; *yam*: that which; *prāpya*: gaining; *na*: never; *nivartante*: comes back; *tad dhāma*: that abode; *paramaṁ*: supreme; *mama*: Mine

8.21 *That supreme abode is said to be intangible and infallible and is the supreme destination. When one gains this state one never comes back. That is My supreme abode.*

nef: g na: nW^°\$ mbä`nEdZY`m`
`ñ`mV:nWmZ ^ymZ`Z gd°X\$VV_2` 8.22

puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha bhaktyā labhyaḥ tv ananyayā |
yasyā 'ntaḥsthāni bhūtāni yena sarvaṁ idaṁ tatam || 8.22

puruṣaḥ: the supreme personality; *saḥ*: He; *paraḥ*: the Supreme, than whom no one is greater; *pārtha*: O son of Pritha; *bhaktyā*: by devotional service; *labhyaḥ*: can be achieved; *tu*: but; *ananyayā*: unalloyed, undeviating devotion; *yasya*: whom; *antaḥ sthāni*: within; *bhūtāni*: all of this material manifestation; *yena*: by whom; *sarvaṁ*: all; *idaṁ*: whatever we can see; *tatam*: distributed

8.22 *Son of Pritha, the supreme person, who is greater than all, is attainable by undeviating devotion. Although He is present in His abode, He is all-pervading, and everything is situated within Him.*

ḥ ī HṣtoĒdZndŷīm ndŷīm Md ḥ nŷJZ: ॥
 ā`nVm`nŷV VṣHṣtoṣdú`nŷ ^aVfṣ ॥ 8.23

yatra kāle tv anāvṛttim āvṛttim ca 'va yoginaḥ |
 prayātā yānti taṁ kālāṁ vakṣyāmi bharata ṛṣabha || 8.23

yatra: in that; kāle: time; tu: but; anāvṛttim: no return; āvṛttim: return; ca: also; eva: certainly; yoginaḥ: of different kinds of mystics; prayātāḥ: one who goes; yānti: departs; taṁ: that; kālāṁ: time; vakṣyāmi: describing; bharataṛṣabha: O best of the Bharatas.

8.23 O best of the Bharata, I shall now explain to you the different times when passing away from this world, one returns or does not return.

A{JŌnŷVah: eṣb: fĒ_nŷmCīnam U_2 ॥
 Vī ā`nVmJĀNpŷV ~ṣ- ~ṣ-{dXmoZm ॥ 8.24

agnir jyotir ahaḥ śuklaḥ ṣaṇmāsā uttarāyaṇam |
 tatra prayātā gacchanti brahma brahmavido janāḥ || 8.24

agniḥ: fire; jyotiḥ: light; ahaḥ: day; śuklaḥ: white; ṣaṇmāsāḥ: six months; uttarāyaṇam: when the sun passes on the northern side; tatra: there; prayātāḥ: one who goes; gacchanti: passes away; brahma: to the Absolute; brahmavidaḥ: one who knows the Absolute; janāḥ: person

8.24 Those who pass away from the world during the influence of the fire god, during light, at an auspicious moment, during the fortnight of the moon ascending and the six months when the sun travels in the north, and have realized the supreme Brahman do not return.

Yy_nŷanŷīñVWmHṣU: fĒ_nŷm X{j Um Z_2 ॥
 Vī MnŷĒ_gṣĀ`nŷV`nŷJr ānṣ {ZdVṣo ॥ 8.25

dhūmo rātris tathā kṛṣṇaḥ ṣaṇmāsā dakṣiṇāyanam |
 tatra cāndramasāṁ jyotir yogī prāpya nivartate || 8.25

dhūmaḥ: smoke; rātriḥ: night; tathā: also; kṛṣṇaḥ: the fortnight of the dark moon; ṣaṇmāsāḥ: the six months; dakṣiṇāyanam: when the sun passes on the southern side; tatra: there;

cāndramasaṁ: the moon planet; jyotiḥ: light; yogī: the mystic; prāpya: achieves; nivartate: comes back.

8.25 The mystic who passes away from this world during the smoke, the night, the moonless fortnight, or the six months when the sun passes to the south, have done good deeds go to the cosmic layer and again comes back.

eṣbH\$UoJVr oṁVoOJV: eṁeVo_Voḥ
EH\$ m`nē`Zndfīm_Y`ndVṠonZ:Y&& 8.26

śuklakṛṣṇe gatī hy ete jagataḥ śāśvate mate |
ekayā yāty anāvṛttim anyayā 'vartate punaḥ || 8.26

śukla: light; kṛṣṇe: darkness; gatī: passing away; hi: certainly; ete: all these; jagataḥ: of the material world; śāśvate: of the Vedas; mate: in the opinion; ekayā: by one; yāti: goes; anāvṛttim: no return; anyayā: by the other; āvartate: comes back; punaḥ: again

8.26 According to the Vedas, there are two ways of passing from this world: one in the light and one in darkness. When one passes in light, he does not return; but when one passes in darkness, he again comes back.

ZVogVr nṁW©mZÝ`ndr _w(V H\$üZ Ḥ
Vñ_nēgdjwH\$ḡbfw`nd`Ṡ\$no^dnOḤ Ḥ&& 8.27

nai 'te sṛtī pārtha jānan yogī muhyati kaścana |
tasmāt sarveṣu kālēṣu yogayukto bhavā 'rjuna || 8.27

na: never; ete: all these; sṛtī: different paths; pārtha: O son of Pritha; jānan: even if they know; yogī: the devotees of the Lord; muhyati: bewildered; kaścana: anyone; tasmāt: therefore; sarveṣu kālēṣu: always; yoga yuktaḥ: being engaged in Krishna consciousness; bhava: just become; arjuna: O Arjuna

8.27 O son of Pritha, the devotees who know these different paths are never bewildered. O Arjuna, be always fixed in devotion.

दक्षिणं कुरुवन्तः गन्तव्यं तत्रैव निश्चिंत्य
 अथैव वेदेषु यज्ञेषु तपस्यसु दानेषु यत् पुण्यफलं प्राप्नुयान् ।
 अत्येति तत् सर्वं यदा विदित्वा योगी परमं स्थानं उपैति सा तदा ॥ ८.२८

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu cai 'va dāneṣu yat puṇyaphalaṁ pradiṣṭam ।
 atyeti tat sarvaṁ idaṁ viditvā yogī paraṁ sthānam upaiti cā 'dyam ॥ 8.28*

vedeṣu: in the study of the Vedas; *yajñeṣu*: in the performances of yajna, sacrifice; *tapaḥsu*: undergoing different types of austerities; *ca*: also; *eva*: certainly; *dāneṣu*: in giving charities; *yat*: that which; *puṇya phalaṁ*: the result of pious work; *pradiṣṭam*: directed; *atyeti*: surpasses; *tat*: all those; *sarvaṁ idaṁ*: all those described above; *viditvā*: knowing; *yogī*: the devotee; *paraṁ*: supreme; *sthānam*: abode; *upaiti*: achieved peace; *ca*: also; *ādyam*: original.

8.28 *A person who accepts the path of devotional service is not denied the results derived from studying the Vedas, performing austerities and sacrifices, giving charity or pursuing pious and result based activities. At the end he reaches the supreme abode.*

इति श्रीमद्भगवद्गीतासूपनिषत्सु ब्रह्मविद्यायाम् योगशास्त्रे
 श्रीकृष्णार्जुनसंवादे अक्षराब्रह्म योगो नाम अष्टमोऽध्यायः ॥ २८ ॥

*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre ।
 śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde akṣarabrahma yogo nāma aṣṭamo 'dhyāyaḥ ॥*

In the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eighth discourse designated:

Akṣarabrahma Yogaḥ

Verses Of Gita Chapter - 9

AW Zd_`m :

amO{dÚmamOJv`mJ :

Rājavidyā rāja guhyaṁ Yogaḥ

I r ^JdmZdmM

BX\$VwV_oJv`_šadú`m` Zg) do&

kmZ\$(dkmZg{hV\$` ÁknEdm_nú` gœw`m`2& 9.1

śrī bhagavān uvāca

idaṁ tu te guhyatamaṁ pravakṣyāmy anasūyave ।

jñānaṁ vijñānasahitaṁ yaj jñātvā mokṣyase 'śubhāt ॥ 9.1

śrī bhagavān uvāca: the supreme personality of godhead said; idaṁ: this; tu: but; te: unto you; guhyatamaṁ: the most confidential; pravakṣyāmi: I am speaking; anasūyave: to the non-envious; jñānaṁ: knowledge; vijñāna: realized knowledge; sahitaṁ: with; yat: which; jñātvā: knowing; mokṣyase: be released; aśubhāt: from this miserable material existence.

9.1 Krishna said: Arjuna, you trust Me and you are not envious of Me; I shall therefore impart to you this profound and secret wisdom and experience; This will free you of all miseries of material existence.

amO{dÚmamOJv`\$n{dl{X_ūm_2&

nē`j mclJ_ŠYā`^ggyt \$H\$V@i`_2& 9.2

rājavidyā rājaguhyam pavitram idaṁ uttamaṁ ।

pratyakṣāvagamaṁ dharmyaṁ susukhaṁ kartum avyayaṁ ॥ 9.2

rājavidyā: the king of education; rājaguhyam: the king of confidential knowledge; pavitram: the purest; idaṁ: this; uttamaṁ: transcendental; pratyakṣa: directly experienced; avagamaṁ: understood; dharmyaṁ: the principle of religion; susukhaṁ: very happy; kartum: to execute; avyayaṁ: everlasting.

9.2 This knowledge is king of all knowledge and the most secret of all secrets. It is the purest knowledge, sacred and gives direct perception of Self realization. It is eternal and easy to practice.

Al ŌYmZm nēfmY_Ō` mī` naVn &
 AānB` _n(ZdVfVo_Ō` wsgmdE_ŌZ & 9.3

aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā dharmasyā 'sya paramtapa |
aprāpya mām nivartante mṛtyu saṁsāra vartmani || 9.3

aśraddadhānāḥ: those who are faithless; *puruṣāḥ*: such persons; *dharmasya*: of this process of religion; *asya*: of it; *paramtapa*: O killer of the enemies; *aprāpya*: without obtaining; *mām*: Me; *nivartante*: come back; *mṛtyu*: death; *saṁsāra*: material existence; *vartmani*: on the path of.

9.3 Those who have no faith in this knowledge cannot attain Me, O conqueror of foes;

_`mVV{Xsgd^aOJXi`°\$yVZm&
 _ĒnWmZ gd^oy/mZ Z Mnh\$VōddpñWV: && 9.4

mayā tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ jagad avyakta mūrtinā |
matsthāni sarva bhūtāni na ca 'haṁ teṣv avasthitaḥ || 9.4

mayā: by Me; *tatam*: spread; *idaṁ*: all these manifestations; *sarvaṁ*: all; *jagat*: cosmic manifestation; *avyakta mūrtinā*: unmanifested form; *mat sthāni*: unto Me; *sarva bhū tā ni*: all living entities; *na*: not; *ca*: also; *ahaṁ*: I; *teṣu*: in them; *avasthitaḥ*: situated.

9.4 The entire universe is pervaded by Me in My formless form. All beings are based on Me, but I am not in them.

Z M _ĒnWmZ ^y/mZ nī` _o`mō_jīda_²&
 ^y/^P M ^y/nWm__nē_m^y/^mclZ: && 9.5

na ca matsthāni bhūtāni paśya me yogam aiśvaram |
bhūtabhṛn na ca bhūtaṣtho mamā 'tmā bhūtabhāvanaḥ || 9.5

na: never; *ca*: also; *matsthāni*: situated in Me; *bhūtāni*: all creation; *paśya*: just see; *me*: My; *yogaṁ aiśvaram*: inconceivable mystic power; *bhūtabhṛt*: maintainer of all living entities; *na*: never; *ca*: also; *bhūtaṣthaḥ*: in the cosmic manifestation; *mama*: My; *ātmā*: Self; *bhūta bhāvanaḥ*: is the source of all manifestations.

9. 5 Look at My mystic powers! I create and sustain all living entities but do not depend on them, nor do they depend on Me.

ṁWmH\$epñVWVno{ZĒ` \$dm̃ w gd̃P̃Jno_hmZ²`
VWmgdm̃U ^Vm̃Z _ĒñWmZrĒ` mYma` ॥ 9.6

yathā 'kāśasthito nityaṁ vāyuḥ sarvatrago mahān |
tathā sarvāṇi bhūtāni matsthānī 'ty upadhāraya || 9.6

yathā: as much as; ākāśasthitaḥ: situated in space; nityaṁ: always; vāyuḥ: wind; sarvatragaḥ: blowing everywhere; mahān: great; tathā: similarly; sarvāṇi: everything; bhūtāni: created beings; matsthānī: situated in Me; iti: thus; upadhāraya: try to understand.

9.6 As the mighty wind, blowing everywhere, always rests in eternal space, all beings rest in Me.

gd̃P̃Vm̃Z H\$ṼVò àH\$ṼV `m̃ṼV _m̃ṼV _H\$ṼV²`
H\$enj `onm̃ZñVm̃Z H\$ennKm̃{dgDm̃`h_²` 9.7

sarva bhūtāni kaunteya prakṛtiṁ yānti māmikāṁ |
kalpakṣaye punas tāni kalpātau viśṛjāmy aham || 9.7

sarva bhūtāni: all created entities; kaunteya: O son of Kunti; prakṛtiṁ: nature; yānti: enter; māmikāṁ: unto Me; kalpakṣaye: at the end of the millennium; punaḥ: again; tāni: all those; kalpātau: in the beginning of the millennium; viśṛjāmi: I create; aham: I.

9.7 O son of Kunti, at the end of every age all beings merge into Me, at the beginning of every new age I create them again.

àH\$ṼV ñdm̃_dīā` {dgDm̃_nm̃Z: nm̃Z:²`
^Vm̃_{_H\$eg³_dešàH\$ṼVdm̃V²` 9.8

prakṛtiṁ svām avaṣṭabhya viśṛjāmi punaḥ-punaḥ |
bhūta grāmam imaṁ kṛtsnam avaśaṁ prakṛter vaśāt || 9.8

prakṛtiḥ: material nature; *svām*: of My personal Self; *avaṣṭabhya*: enter in; *visṛjāmi*: create; *punaḥ punaḥ*: again and again; *bhūta grāmaḥ*: all these cosmic manifestations; *imaḥ*: this; *kṛtsnaḥ*: total; *avaśaḥ*: automatically; *prakṛteḥ*: by the force of nature; *vaśāt*: under obligation.

9.8 My material nature creates the beings again and again. They are controlled by My material nature.

na ca māṁ tāni karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanañjaya ।
udāsīnavad āsīnam asaktaṁ teṣu karmasu ॥ 9.9

na: never; *ca*: also; *māṁ*: Me; *tāni*: all those; *karmāṇi*: activities; *nibadhnanti*: bind; *dhanañjaya*: O conqueror of riches; *udāsīnavat*: as neutral; *āsī nam*: situated; *asaktaṁ*: without attraction; *teṣu*: in them; *karmasu*: in activities.

9.9 O Dhananjaya, all this work does not bind Me. I am ever unattached and indifferent.

mayā 'dhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sacarācaram ।
hetunā 'nena kaunteya jagat viparivartate ॥ 9.10

mayā: by Me; *adhyakṣeṇa*: by superintendence; *prakṛtiḥ*: material nature; *sūyate*: manifests; *sacarācaram*: with the moving and the nonmoving; *hetunā*: for this reason; *anena*: this; *kaunteya*: O son of Kunti; *jagat*: the cosmic manifestation; *viparivartate*: is working.

9.10 The material nature of prakṛti works under My direction, O son of Kunti, and creates all moving and unmoving beings through My energy of māyā. By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.

AdOmZpV _n\$ _Tm _mZfr\$VZw nI V_ 2' &
na\$^nd _OmZVno __ ^y_ hœa_ 2' & 9.11

avajānanti mām mūḍhā mānuṣīm tanum āśritam ।
param bhāvam ajānanto mama bhūta maheśvaram ॥ 9.11

avajānanti: deride; *mām*: Me; *mūḍhāḥ*: foolish men; *mānuṣīm*: in human form; *tanum*: body; *āśritam*: assuming; *param*: transcendental; *bhāvam*: nature; *ajānantaḥ*: not knowing; *mama*: Mine; *bhūta*: everything that be; *maheśvaram*: the supreme proprietor.

9.11 Fools deride Me when I descend in the human form. They do not know My transcendental nature and My supreme dominion over all that is.

_nKmem _nKH\$ _nEno _nKkmZm {dMw/g: &
anj gr _ngat Mpd àH\$V _nfhZt {I Vm & 9.12

moghāśā moghakarmāṇo moghajñānā vicetasah ।
rākṣasīm āsurīm caiva prakṛtiṁ mohiniṁ śritāḥ ॥ 9.12

moghāśāḥ: baffled hope; *mogha karmāṇaḥ*: baffled in fruitive activities; *mogha jñānāḥ*: baffled in knowledge; *vicetasah*: bewildered; *rākṣasīm*: demonic; *āsurīm*: atheistic; *ca*: and; *eva*: certainly; *prakṛtiṁ*: nature; *mohiniṁ*: bewildering; *śritāḥ*: taking shelter of.

9.12 Those who are thus deluded are demonic and atheistic. In their deluded condition, their hopes for liberation, their result oriented actions and their culture of knowledge become false and useless.

_hne _mZnVw _n\$nmVXpt àH\$V _nI Vm &
^OYĒ` ZY` _ZgmknĒdm ^y/nX_ i` ` 2' & 9.13

mahātmānas tu mām pārtha daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ ।
bhajanty ananya manaso jñātvā bhūtādīm avyayam ॥ 9.13

mahātmānaḥ: the great souls; *tu*: but; *mām*: unto Me; *pārtha*: O son of Pritha; *daivīm*: divine; *prakṛtiṁ*: nature; *āśritāḥ*: taken shelter of; *bhajanti*: render service; *ananya manasaḥ*: without deviation of the mind; *jñātvā*: knowing; *bhūta*: creation; *ādīm*: original; *avyayam*: inexhaustible.

9.13 O son of Pritha, the great souls who are not deluded know me as unchangeable. They are devoted to Me as they know as the cause of all creation.

gVVS\$H\$V©Vvno_n\$`Vvü NTdV/m V&
Z_n`Vvü _n\$^ŠE`m{ZÉ``W\$mCnmgVoV& 9.14

satatam kīrtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha vratāḥ |
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā nityayuktā upāsate || 9.14

satatam: always; kīrtayantaḥ: chanting; mām: Me; yatantaḥ ca: fully endeavoring also; dṛḍha vratāḥ: with determination; namasyantaḥ ca: offering obeisance; mām: unto Me; bhaktyā: in devotion; nitya yuktā: perpetually engaged; upāsate: worship.

9.14 Those with firm resolve perpetually worship Me with devotion. They sing My glories, striving with determination, prostrating to Me.

kmZ`kZ MnB`Y`o`OvVno_m_mmgVoV&
EHŠEdZ nWŠEdZ ~hYm{dœVno_vl _2V& 9.15

jñānayajñena cā 'py anye yajanto mām upāsate |
ekatvena prthaktvena bahudhā viśvatomukham || 9.15

jñāna yajñena: by cultivation of knowledge; ca: also; api: certainly; anye: others; yajantaḥ: worshiping; mām: Me; upāsate: worship; ekatvena: in oneness; prthaktvena: in duality; bahudhā: diversity; viśvato mukham: in the universal form.

9.15 Some worship Me by acquiring and spreading wisdom of the Self. Others worship Me in my non dual form, or dual form or universal form.

Ah\$H\$Vh\$`k: ñdYnh_h_nFY_2V&
_Ylneh_h_dnA`_h_{Jah\$hp_2V& 9.16

aham kratur aham yajñah svadhā 'ham aham auśadham |
mantra 'ham aham evā 'jyam aham agnir aham hutam || 9.16

aham: I; *kratuḥ*: ritual; *aham*: I; *yajñah*: sacrifice; *svadhā*: oblation; *aham*: I; *auśadham*: healing herb; *mantraḥ*: transcendental chant; *aham*: I; *aham*: I; *eva*: certainly; *ājyam*: melted butter; *aham*: I; *agniḥ*: fire; *aham*: I; *hutam*: offering.

{nVnh_n` OJVno_n/mYn/m{nVm_h: &
dU\$N{dI_no F\$Sgm_`Omd M & 9.17

pitā 'ham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ |
vedyam pavitram aumkāra ṛk sāma yajur eva ca || 9.17

pitā: father; *aham*: I; *asya*: of this; *jagataḥ*: of the universe; *mātā*: mother; *dhātā*: supporter; *pitāmahaḥ*: grandfather; *vedyam*: what is to be known; *pavitram*: that which purifies; *omkāraḥ*: the syllable om; *ṛk*: the Rig Veda; *sāma*: the Sama Veda; *yajur*: the Yajur Veda; *eva*: certainly; *ca*: and

J{V^Vnfa^w gmj r {Zdmg: eaU\$gmV^2&
à^d: àb`: ñWmZ\$ZYNZ\$~rO_i``_2& 9.18

gatiḥ bhartā prabhuḥ sākṣī nivāsaḥ śaraṇam suhṛt |
prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānam nidhānam bījam avyayam || 9.18

gatiḥ: goal; *bhartā*: sustainer; *prabhuḥ*: Lord; *sākṣī*: witness; *nivāsaḥ*: abode; *śaraṇam*: refuge; *suhṛt*: most intimate friend; *prabhavaḥ*: creation; *pralayaḥ*: dissolution; *sthānam*: ground; *nidhānam*: resting place; *bījam*: seed; *avyayam*: imperishable.

Vnmā`h_h\$df^ZJ#mā`lgDm_ M &
A_¥\$Mp_£`ü gXgfnh_O& 9.19

tapāmy aham aham varṣam nigrhṇāmy utsṛjāmi ca |
amṛtaṁ cai 'va mṛtyuś ca sad asac cā 'ham arjuna || 9.19

tapāmi: give heat; *ahaṁ*: I; *ahaṁ*: I; *varṣaṁ*: rain; *nigṛhṇāmi*: withhold; *utsṛjāmi*: send forth; *ca*: and; *amṛtaṁ*: immortality; *ca*: and; *eva*: certainly; *mṛ tyuḥ*: death; *ca*: and; *sat*: being; *asat*: nonbeing; *ca*: and; *ahaṁ*: I; *arjuna*: O Arjuna.

9.16, 17, 18, 19

I am the ritual, I am the sacrifice, I am the offering, I am the herb, I am the mantra, I am the clarified butter, I am the fire, and I am the oblation.

I am the supporter of the universe, the father, the mother, and the grandfather. I am the object of knowledge, the sacred syllable "OM", and also the Rig, the Yajur, and the Sama Vedas.

I am the goal, the supporter, the Lord, the witness, the abode, the refuge, the friend, the origin, the dissolution, the foundation, the substratum, and the immutable seed. I give heat. I send, as well as withhold, the rain.

I am immortality, as well as death. I am also both the Eternal and the temporal, O Arjuna.

Ṭ{dÚm_nŕsgn_nm nŕ/nmm` k[aiŔQ&ndJ&V ànW©ŶVolk
Vonŕŕ`_mgmŬ gnŭŔbmbŕŕ_I pŕV {Xŕ`nŕYX{d Xd^mŕZ²ŕ& 9.20

traividyā mām somapāḥ pūtapāpā yajñair iṣṭvā svargatim prārthayante |
te puṇyam āsādyā surendralokam aśnanti divyān divi devabhogān || 9.20

traī vidyāḥ: the knowers of the three Vedas; *mām*: unto Me; *somapāḥ*: drinkers of soma juice; *pūta*: purified; *pāpāḥ*: sins; *yajñair*: with sacrifices; *iṣṭvā*: after worshiping; *svargatim*: passage to heaven; *prārthayante*: pray; *te*: they; *puṇyam*: virtue; *āsādyā*: enjoying; *surendra*: of Indra; *lokam*: the world; *aśnanti*: enjoy; *divyān*: celestial; *divi*: in heaven; *deva bhogān*: pleasures of the gods.

9.20 Those who practice the vedic rituals and drink the soma juice worship Me indirectly seeking the heavenly pleasures. They go to heaven and enjoy sensual delights.

VoV\$^ŠEdmñdJĐnH\$ {dem\$ſj rUonſi`o_Ē`ĐnH\$ {depV\$
Ed\$Ī`rY_©ZñnPmJVmV\$H\$m_H\$m_m b^ŸVo&& 9.21

*te taṁ bhuktvā svargalokaṁ viśālaṁ kṣīṇe puṇye martyalokaṁ viśanti ।
evaṁ trayīdharmam anuprapannā gatāgataṁ kāmakāmā labhante ॥ 9.21*

te: they; taṁ: that; bhuktvā: enjoying; svarga lokaṁ: heaven; viśālaṁ: vast; kṣīṇe: being exhausted; puṇye: merits; martya lokaṁ: mortal earth; viśanti: fall down; evaṁ: thus; trayī: three Vedas; dharmāḥ: doctrines; anuprapannāḥ: following; gatāgataṁ: death and birth; kāma kāmāḥ: desiring sense enjoyments; labhante: attain

9.21 Once they have thus enjoyed heavenly sense pleasure, they are reborn on this planet again. By practicing vedic rituals as result oriented actions, they are bound by the cycle of birth and death.

AZŸ`n(üŸV`ŸVno_nſ`oOZm n`ſmgVo&
VŸnſ(ZĒ`nſ^`ŸſnZnſ`mſj_o_ſdhmā`h_²&& 9.22

*ananyāś cintayanto mām ye janāḥ paryupāsate ।
teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānām yogakṣemaṁ vahāmi aham ॥ 9.22*

ananyāḥ: no other; cintayantaḥ: concentrating; mām: unto Me; ye: who; janāḥ: persons; paryupāsate: properly worship; teṣāṁ: their; nityābhiyuktānām: always fixed in devotion; yoga kṣemaṁ: requirements; vahāmi: carry; aham: I.

9.22 When you reside in My consciousness, whatever you lack I give. And whatever you have, I preserve

`@ſ`Ÿ`XoVm^°\$n`OŸVoI Ō`mŸdVm`&
Vo{n`_m_oH\$ŸVò`OŸĒ`{d{YnŸŸſ_²&& 9.23

*ye 'py anyadevatā bhaktā yajante śraddhayā 'nvitāḥ ।
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya yajanty avidhipūrvakam ॥ 9.23*

ye: those; *api*: also; *anya*: other; *devatāḥ*: demigods; *bhaktāḥ*: devotees; *yajante*: worship; *śraddhayā anvitāḥ*: with faith; *te*: they; *api*: also; *mām*: Me; *eva*: even; *kaunteya*: O son of Kunti; *yajanti*: sacrifice; *avidhi pūrvakam*: in a wrong way.

9.23 Even those who worship other deities, they too worship Me, O son of Kunti but without true understanding.

Ahṣ{h gd©knZnṣ^nṣmM à^m d M ṽ
Z Vw_m_{^OmZpV VIdZmVīA`dpV Voṽ 9.24

aham hi sarvayajñānām bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca |
na tu mām abhijānanti tattvenā 'taś cyavanti te || 9.24

aham: I; *hi*: surely; *sarva*: of all; *yajñānām*: sacrifices; *bhoktā*: enjoyer; *ca*: and; *prabhuḥ*: Lord; *eva*: also; *ca*: and; *na*: not; *tu*: but; *mām*: Me; *abhijānanti*: know; *tattvena*: in reality; *ataḥ*: therefore; *cyavanti*: fall down; *te*: they

9.24 I am the only enjoyer and the only object of sacrifice. Those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature are born again and again.

`npV X d d k/m X d npV n Vṽ` npV {n Vṽ k/m ṽ
^j/m Z ` npV ^j/A` m ` npV _Úm(OZn n _m ²&& 9.25

yānti devavratā devān pitṛn yānti pitṛvratāḥ |
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā yānti madyājino 'pi mām || 9.25

yānti: achieve; *deva vratāḥ*: worshipers of demigods; *devān*: to demigods; *pitṛn*: to ancestors; *yānti*: go; *pitṛ vratāḥ*: worshipers of the ancestors; *bhūtāni*: to ghosts and spirits; *yānti*: go; *bhūtejyāḥ*: worshippers of ghosts and spirits; *yānti*: go; *mad*: My; *yājinaḥ*: devotees; *api*: also; *mām*: unto Me.

9.25 Those who worship the deities will take birth among the deities; those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings; those who worship ancestors go to the ancestors; those who worship Me will live with Me.

nġšnũ\$\\\$o\$Vnò\$`no_o^ŠĖ`mà`AN\$V`&
VXh\$^ŠĖ`möv_I`Ĥ`à`VnĖ_Z: && 9.26

patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyaṁ yo me bhaktyā prayacchati |
tad ahaṁ bhakty upahṛtam aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ || 9.26

patraṁ: a leaf; *puṣpaṁ*: a flower; *phalaṁ*: a fruit; *toyaṁ*: water; *yaḥ*: whoever; *me*: unto Me; *bhaktyā*: with devotion; *prayacchati*: offers; *tat*: that; *ahaṁ*: I; *bhaktyupahṛtaṁ*: offered in devotion; *aśnāmi*: accept; *prayatātmanaḥ*: of one in pure consciousness.

9.26 Whoever offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit or water, I will accept and consume what is offered by the pure hearted

`ĖH\$anŃf`Xl`Ĥ(g`,`nġnŃf`XXnŃg`V²`&
`Ĥmñ`{g`H\$ŃVò`VĖHŃĖĭd`XnŃ_²`&& 9.27

yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat |
yat tapasyasi kaunteya tat kuruṣva mad arpaṇam || 9.27

yat: whatever; *karoṣi*: you do; *yat*: whatever; *aśnāsi*: you eat; *yat*: whatever; *juhoṣi*: you offer; *dadāsi*: you give away; *yat*: whatever; *tapasyasi*: austerities you perform; *kaunteya*: O son of Kunti; *tat*: that; *kuruṣva*: make; *mat*: unto Me; *arpaṇam*: offering.

9.27 O son of Kunti, all that you do, all that you eat, all that you offer and give away, as well as all austerities that you may perform, give them as an offering to Me.

eŃmeŃ`\\\$opd\$`mũ`goH\$`©ŲYZ;`&
g\$`ng`mũ`Ų\$ŃĖ`m`{d`Ų\$Ń`m`mĵ`{g`&& 9.28

śubhāśubhaphalair evaṁ mokṣyase karmabandhanaiḥ |
saṁnyāsa yoga yuktātmā vimukto mām upaiśyasi || 9.28

śubha: good; *aśubha*: evil; *phalaiḥ*: results; *evaṁ*: thus; *mokṣyase*: free; *karma*: action; *bandhanaiḥ*: bondage; *saṁnyāsa*: of renunciation; *yoga*: the yoga; *yuktātmā*: having the mind firmly set on; *vimuktaḥ*: liberated; *mām*: to Me; *upaiśyasi*: you will attain.

9.28 You will be freed from all reactions to good and evil deeds by this renunciation, You will be liberated and come to Me.

g_mehsgd°VfWZ_oÜö`mepñV Z {à` : &
`o^OpñV Vw_n\$^ŠE`m_{` VoVfWMinb`h_²&& 9.29

samo 'hañ sarvabhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ |
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cā 'py aham || 9.29

samaḥ: equally disposed; ahañ: I; sarva bhūteṣu: to all living entities; na: no one; me: Mine; dveṣyaḥ: hateful; asti: is; na: nor; priyaḥ: dear; ye: those; bhajanti: render transcendental service; tu: yet; mām: unto Me; bhaktyā: in devotion; mayi: unto Me; te: such persons; teṣu: in them; ca: also; api: certainly; ahañ: I.

9.29 I dislike no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. Whoever is devoted to Me is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him.

A{n MägKnnMman^OVo_m_ZY`^nH\$ &
gmYnd g_YVi` : gā`h`d{gVno{h g: && 9.30

api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananyabhāk |
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ || 9.30

api: in spite of; cet: although; sudurācāraḥ: one committing the most abominable actions; bhajate: engaged in devotional service; mām: unto Me; ananyabhāk: without deviation; sādhur: saint; eva: certainly; saḥ: he; mantavyaḥ: to be considered; samyak: completely; vyavasitah: situated; hi: certainly; saḥ: he.

9.30 Even if the most sinful person engages himself in devotional service, He is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated

{j a\$^d{V Y_m_eceANpñV {ZJAN\$V &
H\$ñVö à{VOnZr{h Z_o^°\$: àUí`{V && 9.31

_Ÿ_Zm^d_Ø°\$no_ÚnOr_n\$Z_nH0é &
 _m_olj`{g`ŠĖdp_nĚ_mZ\$_Ėnam`U: && 9.34

manmanā bhava madbhakto madyājī mām namaskuru ।
 mām evai 'śyasi yuktvai 'vam ātmānaṁ matparāyaṇaḥ ॥ 9.34

matmanāḥ: always thinking of Me; *bhava*: become; *mad*: My; *bhaktaḥ*: devotee; *madyājī*: My worshiper; *mām*: unto Me; *namaskuru*: offer obeisances; *mām*: unto Me; *eva*: completely; *eśyasi*: come; *yuktvā evaṁ*: being absorbed; *ātmānaṁ*: your soul; *matparāyaṇaḥ*: devoted to Me.

9.34 Fix your mind on Me, be devoted to Me, worship Me, and bow down to Me. Thus, uniting yourself with Me by setting Me as the supreme goal and the sole refuge, you shall certainly come to Me.

B{V I r_ØJdØrVnqgn{ZfĖgw~«-{dÚm`n\$`n0emóo
 I rH\$ŸUnOĖgšlnKoanO{dÚnanOJw`nolnoZm_Zd≥n0U`m: &&

iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām
 yogaśāstre śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde rājavidyā rājaguhyā yogo nāma
 navamo 'dhyāyaḥ ॥

In the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the ninth discourse designated:

Rājavidyā rāja guhyam Yogah

Verses Of Gita Chapter 10

AW Xe_mU` n̄ ...

{d^yV` mJ...

Vibhūthi Yogaḥ

I r ^JdmZdmM &

^y Ed _hm-nhmoUw_ona_ \$dM: &

`Îneh\$âr`_nUm̄ dú` n{hVH\$ñā` `m && 1

Śrī bhagavān uvāca

bhūya eva mahābāho śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ |

yat te 'haṁ prīyamāṇāya vakṣyāmi hitakāmyayā || 10.1

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Lord Krishna said; *bhūyaḥ:* again; *eva:* surely; *mahābāho:* big-armed; *śṛṇu:* hear; *me:* My; *paramaṁ:* supreme; *vacaḥ:* word; *yat:* that which; *te:* to you; *ahaṁ:* I; *prīyamāṇāya:* dear to Me; *vakṣyāmi:* say; *hitakāmyayā:* with the desire for your benefit.

10.1 Lord Krishna said: Listen again, Oh Arjuna! You are My dear friend, Listen carefully again, I shall speak further on knowledge for your welfare.

Z_o{dXw gwJU m à^d\$Z _hf©: &

Ah_m{X{h^XdmZn\$ _hfU n\$M gd@: && 2

na me viduḥ suragaṇāḥ prabhavaṁ na maharṣayaḥ |

aham ādir hi devānām maharṣīṇām ca sarvaśaḥ || 10.2

na: not; *me:* My; *viduḥ:* know; *suragaṇāḥ:* demigods; *prabhavaṁ:* glories; *na:* not; *maharṣayaḥ:* great sages; *aham:* I; *ādir:* origin; *hi:* certainly; *devānām:* of the gods; *maharṣīṇām:* of the great sages; *ca:* and; *sarvaśaḥ:* in all respects.

10.2 Neither the hosts of deities nor the great sages know My origin, My opulence. I am the source of the deities and the sages.

no_m_O_ZmX M dōīm bñbš_hoea_2
AgšJ> g_Ē`fmgdñm; à_À`Vo&& 3

yo mām aṣam anādim ca vetti lokamaheśvaram ।
asaṁmūḍhaḥ sa martyeṣu sarvapāpaiḥ pramucyate ॥ 10.3

yo: who; mām: to Me; aṣam: unborn; anādim: without beginning; ca: and; vetti: know; loka: worlds; maheśvaram: supreme lord; asaṁmūḍhaḥ: without doubt; sa: he; martyeṣu: mortal; sarva: all; pāpaiḥ: sins; pramucyate: delivered.

10.3 He who knows Me as the unborn, without beginning, and supreme Lord of all the worlds, Only he, who has this clarity, is wise and freed from all bondage.

~(Ökn2_gā_nñ: j_mgĒ`\$X_: e_: &
gñ \$XwI \$^dñe^ndñe^`\$Mm^`_ed M && 4

buddhir jñānam asaṁmohaḥ kṣamā satyaṁ damaḥ śamaḥ ।
sukhaṁ duḥkhaṁ bhavo 'bhāvo bhayaṁ cā 'bhayaṁ eva ca ॥ 10.4

buddhiḥ: intelligence; jñānam: knowledge; asaṁmohaḥ: free from doubt; kṣamā: forgiveness; satyaṁ: truthfulness; damaḥ: control of senses; śamaḥ: control of mind; sukhaṁ: happiness; duḥkhaṁ: distress; bhavo 'bhāvo: birth and death; bhayaṁ: fear; cā: and; abhayaṁ: fearlessness; eva: also; ca: and

Aqhgmg_VmVñiñVnñXmZ\$`enp`e: &
^dpV ^ndm^VnZñ_ÎmEd nVp/dYm && 5

ahimsā samatā tuṣṭis tapo dānaṁ yaśo 'yaśaḥ ।
bhavanti bhāvā bhwūtānām matta eva pṛthagvidhāḥ ॥ 10.5

ahimsā: non-violence; *amatā*: equanimity; *tuṣṭiḥ*: satisfaction; *tapo*: austerity; *dānaṁ*: charity; *yaśo*: fame; *ayaśaḥ*: infamy; *bhavanti*: become; *bhāvā*: nature; *bhūtānām*: living beings; *matta*: from me; *eva*: surely; *prthagvidhāḥ*: in various forms

10.4,5 Intelligence, knowledge, freedom from doubt and delusion, forgiveness, truthfulness, control of the senses, control of the mind, happiness, distress, birth, death, fear, fearlessness, non-violence, equanimity, satisfaction, austerity, charity, fame and infamy, all these various qualities of living beings are created by Me alone.

hf©: gá nḍj)MĔdmano_ZdñVWmñ&
_Ømclm_nZgm.OnVm`fññbññ\$B_m àOm ð& 6

maharṣayaḥ sapta pūrve catvāro manavas tathā |
madbhāvā mānasā jātā yeṣāṁ loka imāḥ prajāḥ || 10.6

maharṣayaḥ: great sages; *sapta*: seven; *pūrve*: before; *catvāro*: four; *manavas*: manus; *tathā*: and; *madbhāvā*: endowed with My power; *mānasā*: from the mind; *jātā*: born; *yeṣāṁ*: of them; *loka*: worlds; *imāḥ*: all this; *prajāḥ*: living beings.

10.6 The seven great sages and before them, the four great Manus, endowed with My power, They arose from My mind and all the living beings populating the planet descend from them.

EVñ\$(d^gV`mñ\$M__`mclñmVñdV: ð&
gmñ(dH\$ññZ`mñZ`ñ`VoZmñ gñ` : ð& 7Y

etāṁ vibhūtiṁ yogaṁ ca mama yo vetti tattvataḥ |
so 'vikampena yogena yujyate nā 'tra saṁśayaḥ || 10.7

etāṁ: all this; *vibhūtiṁ*: glory; *yogaṁ*: powers; *ca*: and; *mama*: My; *yo*: who; *vetti*: knows; *tattvataḥ*: truth; *so*: he; *'vikampena*: without distraction; *yogena*: in yoga; *yujyate*: engaged; *nā*: not; *'tra*: here; *saṁśayaḥ*: doubt.

10.7 He who knows all this glory and powers of mine, truly, he is fully united in Me; Of that there is no doubt.

Ahṣgdh̃ à^dm̃ Īm̃ gd̃^adVṣk
B{V _Edm̃^OYVo_nṣ~Wm̃^ndg_pYdVm̃ 8

aham̃ sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate |
iti matvā bhajante mām̃ budhā bhāvasamanvitāḥ || 10.8

aham̃: I; sarvasya: all; prabhavo; source; mattaḥ: from Me; sarvaṁ: all; pravartate: emanates; iti: thus; matvā: knowing; bhajante: pray; mām̃: to Me; budhā: wise; bhāvasamanvitāḥ: surrender

10.8 I am the source of all the spiritual and material worlds. Everything arises from Me. The wise who know this are devoted to Me and surrender their heart to Me.

{f Īm̃m̃_ŌVānJm̃~m̃^YV: naṁna_2k
H\$W̃_YVü _nṣZĒ`SṼm̃ pYV M̃ a_pYV M̃ 9

maccittā madgataprāṇā bodhayantaḥ parasparam |
kathayantaś ca mām̃ nityaṁ tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca || 10.9

maccittā: with mind engaged in Me; madgataprāṇā: lives absorbed in Me; bodhayantaḥ: enlightening; parasparam: one another; kathayantaḥ: talking about My glories; ca: and; mām̃: about Me; nityaṁ: always; tuṣyanti: satisfied; ca: and; ramanti: enjoy bliss; ca: and

10.9 With mind and lives absorbed on Me, always enlightening one another and talking about My glories, the wise are content and blissful.

VfṁsgVW̃ W̃\$Znṣ^OVnṣār(VnṣPṣ_2k
XXm̃_~(Ō`m̃\$Vṣ`Z _m̃m̃`m̃V Vok 10

teṣāṁ satatayuktānāṁ bhajatām̃ prītipūrvakam |
dadāmi buddhiyogaṁ taṁ yena mām̃ upayānti te || 10.10

teṣāṁ: to them; satatayuktānāṁ: always engaged; bhajatām̃: praying; prītipūrvakam: with love; dadāmi: I give; buddhiyogaṁ: intelligence; taṁ: that; yena: by which; mām̃: to Me; upayānti: come; te: they

10.10 To those who are always engaged in Me with love, I give them enlightenment by which they come to Me.

Vfṁ dñZñšānñV©h_kñZOšV_: &
Zñe`nā`ñē`^ñdñVññkñZXrñZ`^ññdVññ&& 11

teṣāṁ evā 'nukampārtham aham ajñānajaṁ tamaḥ |
nāśayāmyātmabhāvastho jñānadīpena bhāsvatā || 10.11

teṣāṁ: to them; evā: also; *anukampārtham*: out of compassion; *aham*: I; *ajñānajaṁ*: born of ignorance; *tamaḥ*: darkness; *nāśayāmi*: destroy; *ātma*: within; *bhāvasthaḥ*: themselves; *jñānadīpena*: lamp of knowledge; *bhāsvatā*: shining

10.11 Out of compassion to them, I destroy the darkness born out of their ignorance by the shining lamp of knowledge.

AO& CdnM
na\$~< na\$Ym_n{d}šna_š^dnZ²&
ñēfšemeV\$Xì`_ñ{XXd_O\${d^w²&& 12

Arjuna uvāca
paraṁ brahma paraṁ dhāma pavitraṁ paramaṁ bhavān |
puruṣaṁ śāśvataṁ divyam ādidevam ajaṁ vibhum || 10.12

Arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; *paraṁ*: supreme; *brahma*: truth; *paraṁ*: supreme; *dhāma*: sustenance; *pavitraṁ*: pure; *paramaṁ*: supreme; *bhavān*: yourself; *puruṣaṁ*: person; *śāśvataṁ*: original; *divyam*: godly; *ādidevam*: original god; *ajaṁ*: unborn; *vibhum*: glorious

10.12 Arjuna said: You are the supreme truth, supreme sustenance, supremely purifier, the primal, eternal and glorious Lord.

Anññēdm_f` : gd}Xa{fññXñVññ&
A{gVññXa{bññ`mg: ñd`šMpd`~dr{f_o&& 13

āhus tvāṁ ṛṣayaḥ sarve devarṣiḥ nāradaś tathā |
asito devalo vyāsaḥ svayaṁ cai 'va bravīṣi me || 10.13

āhuh: say; *tvām:* to you; *ṛṣayaḥ:* sages; *sarve:* all; *devarṣiḥ:* sage of gods; *nāradaḥ:* Narada; *tathā:* and; *asitaḥ:* Asita; *devalaḥ:* Devala; *vyāsaḥ:* Vyasa; *svayam:* personally; *ca:* and; *eva:* surely; *bravīṣi:* explain; *me:* to me

10.13 All the sages like Narada, Asita, Devala, and Vyasa have explained this. Now you are personally explaining to me.

gd©WNV\$ _Ÿ` o` Ÿ_n\$dx{g Hked &
Z {h Vo^ JdŸi` q°\$ {dXW}dmZ XnZdm && 14Ÿ

sarvam etad ṛtaṁ manye yan māṁ vadasi keśava ।
na hi te bhagavan vyaktiṁ vidur devā na dānavāḥ ॥ 10.14

sarvam: all; *etad:* these; *ṛtaṁ:* truths; *manye:* accept; *yan:* which; *māṁ:* to me; *vadasi:* say; *keśava:* Keshava; *na:* not; *hi:* surely; *te:* your; *bhagavan:* lord; *vyaktiṁ :* express; *vidur:* know; *devā:* gods; *na:* nor; *dānavāḥ:* demons

10.14 Oh Kesava, I accept all these truths that You have told me. Oh Lord, neither the gods nor the demons know You.

ñd` _olñē_nē_mZ\$clēW Ēd\$ñēfñm_ &
^Ÿ/^mdZ ^ŸŸe XdXdl OJĒnVo&& 15

svayam evā 'tmanā 'tmānaṁ vettha tvaṁ puruṣottama ।
bhūtabhāvana bhūteśa devadeva jagatpate ॥ 10.15

svayam: own; *evā:* surely; *atmanā:* by yourself; *atmānaṁ:* yourself; *vettha:* know; *tvaṁ:* you; *puruṣottama:* perfect man; *bhūtabhāvana:* origin of beings; *bhūteśa:* lord of beings; *devadeva:* god of gods; *jagatpate:* lord of the world

10.15 Surely, You alone know Yourself by Yourself, Oh Perfect One, the origin of beings, Oh Lord of beings, Oh God of gods, Oh Lord of the world.

d^o_hf`erU {Xì`møñ_{d^v` : &
`m^{d^v{^bññ(Z_ñEd\$ì`nß {Vð\$g && 16ÿ

vaktum arhasy aśeṣeṇa divyā hy ātmavibhūṭayaḥ ।
yābhir vibhūtibhir lokān imāṁs tvaṁ vyāpya tiṣṭhasi ॥ 10.16

vaktum: say; arhasi: deserve; aśeṣeṇa: in detail; divyā: divine; hi: surely; ātma: Your; vibhūṭayaḥ: glories; yābhir: by which; vibhūtibhir: glories; lokān: worlds; imāns: these; tvaṁ: You; vyāpya: pervade; tiṣṭhasi: remain

10.16 Only You can describe in detail Your divine glories by which You pervade this universe.

H\$W\$ {dUm_h\$`mJñEdñ\$gXmn[a{M^V` Z^2&
HöfW HöfWM ^ndfW(MYÉ`m{g ^JdY_`m && 17ÿ

katham vidyām ahaṁ yogimstvām sadā paricintayan ।
keṣu-keṣu ca bhāveṣu cintyo'si bhagavan mayā ॥ 10.17

katham: how; vidyām: know; ahaṁ: I; yogins: yogi; tvām: you; sadā: always; paricintayan: contemplation; keṣu-keṣu: in which; ca: and; bhāveṣu: nature; cintyo'si: contemplated; bhagavan: lord; mayā: by me

10.17 How may I know You by contemplation? In which forms should I contemplate on You, Oh Lord?

{dñValññ_Zm`mJ\$ {d^gV M OZnX^2 &
^ÿ : H\$W` V\$á{h^eEdVmoZmñV _@_Y_`^2 && 18ÿ

vistareṇā 'mano yogaṁ vibhūtiṁ ca janārdana ।
bhūyaḥ kathaya tṛptir hi śṛṇvato nā 'sti me 'mṛtam ॥ 10.18

vistareṇā: in detail; atmano: of Yourself; yogaṁ: powers; vibhūtiṁ: glories; ca: and; janārdana: Janardana; bhūyaḥ: again; kathaya: say; tṛptir: satisfaction; hi: surely; śṛṇvato: hear; nā: not; asti: there; me: my; amṛtam: nectar

10.18 Tell me in detail of your powers and glories, Oh Janardana. Again, please tell for my satisfaction as I do not tire of hearing your sweet words.

ī r ^ J d n Z d n M &
hYV VoH\$W{ ^ ĩ` m_ {Xī` m o nē` {d^y` : &
ā m Y nŸ` V: Hē I ō > Z m ē` Y V m { d n V a n` _ o & 19Y

Śrī bhagavān uvāca
hanta te kathayiṣyāmi divyā hy ātmavibhūtayah |
prādhānyataḥ kuruśreṣṭha nā 'styanto vistarasya me || 10.19

śrī bhagavān uvāca: The Lord said; hanta: yes; te: to you; kathayiṣyāmi: I will talk; divyā: divine; hi: surely; ātma: My; vibhūtayah: glories; prādhānyataḥ: main; kuruśreṣṭha: great among the Kurus; na: not; asti: there; anto: end; vistarasya: detail; me: My

10.19 Krishna said, 'Yes, Oh Kurusreshta, I will talk to you surely of My divine glories; but only of the main ones as there is no end to the details of My glories.

Ah_mē_m JōHē gd^y/me` pñVV: &
Ah_mXü _Ü` \$M ^y/mZm_YV Ed M & 20Y

aham ātmā guḍākeśa sarva bhūtāśayasthitaḥ |
aham ādiś ca madhyaṁ ca bhūtānām anta eva ca || 10.20

aham: I; ātmā: soul; guḍākeśa: Arjuna; sarva: all; bhūtā: living beings; āśayasthitaḥ: situated in; aham: I; ādiś: beginning; ca: and; madhyaṁ: middle; ca: and; bhūtānām: of living beings; anta: end; eva: also; ca: and

10.20 I am the Spirit, Oh Gudakesa, situated in all living beings. I am surely the beginning, middle and end of all beings.

AmXE`mZm_h\$diUÁ`ñVfñsa{da\$w_mZ'V&
ar(M@Vm_pñ_Zj_ÎmUm_h\$eer V& 21Y

ādityānām ahaṁ viṣṇur jyotiṣām ravir amśumān |
marīcīr marutām asmi nakṣatrāṇām ahaṁ śaśī || 10.21

ādityānām: of the Adityas; ahaṁ: I; viṣṇuḥ: Vishnu; jyotiṣām: of the luminaries; raviḥ : the sun; amśumān: bright; marīciḥ: Marichi; marutām: of the Maruts; asmi: am; nakṣatrāṇām: of the nakshatras; ahaṁ: I; śaśī: the moon

10.21 Of the Adityas, I am Vishnu. Of the luminaries, I am the bright sun. Of the Marut, I am Marichi. Of the Nakshatra, I am the Moon.

dXmZn\$gm_dXmepñ_XdmZm_pñ_dmgd: V&
Bp'Đ`mUn\$ZÜmpñ_^y/mZm_pñ_MmZm V& 22Y

vedānām sāmavedo 'smi devānām asmi vāsavaḥ |
indriyāṇām manaś cā 'smi bhūtānām asmi cetanā || 10.22

vedānām: of the Vedas; sāmavedaḥ: Sama Veda; asmi: I am; devānām: of the gods; asmi: I am; vāsavaḥ: Vasava; indriyāṇām: of the senses; manaḥ: mind; ca: and; asmi: I am; bhūtānām: of living beings; asmi: I am; cetanā: consciousness

10.22 Of the Vedas, I am the Sama Veda. Of the gods, I am Indra. Of the senses, I am the mind and in living beings, I am the consciousness.

éDmUn\$e' aÜmñ_{dîmem`j aj gm_2V&
dgyZn\$mdH\$Ümpñ_ _é: {eI [aUm_h_2V& 23Y

rudrāṇām śaṅkaraś cā 'smi vittaśo yakṣarakṣasām |
vasūnām pāvakaś cā 'smi meruḥ śikhariṇām ahaṁ || 10.23

rudrāṇām: of the rudras; śaṅkaraḥ: Shankara; ca: and; asmi: I am; vittaśaḥ: god of wealth; yakṣa: demigods; rakṣasām: demons; vasūnām: of the Vasus; pāvakaḥ: fire; ca: and; asmi: I am; meruḥ: Meru; śikhariṇām: of the peaks; ahaṁ: I

10.23 Of the Rudra, I am Sankara and of the Yaksha and Rakshasa, I am Kubera, god of Wealth. Of the Vasu, I am fire and of the peaks, I am Meru.

nanVgn\$M_`\$`\$d{Ö nmW@-hñn{V_2`
gZnZrZm_h\$ñH\$X: gagm_pñ_ gmJa: & 24

*purodhasām ca mukhyaṁ mām viddhi pārtha bṛhaspatim |
senānīnām ahaṁ skandaḥ sarasām asmi sāgaraḥ || 10.24*

*purodhasām: of the priests; ca: and; mukhyaṁ: main; mām: Me; viddhi: understand;
pārtha: Partha; bṛhaspatim: Brihaspati; senānīnām: of the warriors; ahaṁ: I am;
skandaḥ: Skanda; sarasām: of the water bodies; asmi: I am; sāgaraḥ: the ocean*

10.24 Of the priests, understand, Oh Partha, that I am the chief Brihaspati. Of the warriors, I am Skanda. Of the water bodies, I am the ocean.

_hfuUn\$^Vmh\$Jm_ñâ`b\$_j a_2`
`kmZn\$On`knepn_ñWmclmUn\$(h_nb` : & 25

*maharṣīṇām bṛgur ahaṁ girām asmyekam akṣaram |
yajñānām japayagñō 'smi sthāvarāṇām himālayaḥ || 10.25*

*maharṣīṇām: of the great sages; bṛguḥ: Bhrigu; ahaṁ: I; girām: of the vibrations; asmi:
I am; ekam akṣaram: single letter (Om); yajñānām: of the yajnas (sacrifices);
japayagñāḥ: chanting of holy names; asmi: I am; sthāvarāṇām: of the immovables;
himālayaḥ: Himalayas*

10.25 Of the great sages, I am Bhrigu. Of the vibrations, I am the OM. Of the sacrifices, I am the chanting of holy names. Of the immovable objects, I am the Himalayas.

AīdEW: gd@y nUn\$XdfuUn\$M ZmaX: &
JYdndn\$(MīaW: {gÖmZn\$H\$(nbmo_@Z: & 26

*aśvatthaḥ sarvavṛkṣāṇāṃ devaṛṣiṇāṃ ca nāradaḥ |
gandharvāṇāṃ citrarathaḥ siddhānāṃ kapilo muniḥ || 10.26*

aśvatthaḥ: banyan tree; *sarva*: all; *vṛkṣāṇāṃ*: of the trees; *devaṛṣiṇāṃ*: of the sages of the gods; *ca*: and; *nāradaḥ*: Narada; *gandharvāṇāṃ*: of the Gandharvas; *citrarathaḥ*: Chitraratha; *siddhānāṃ*: of the Siddhas; *kapilaḥ*: Kapila; *muniḥ*: sage

10.26 Of all the trees, I am the Banyan tree and of all the sages of the gods, I am Narada. Of the Gandharvas, I am Chitraratha. Of the realized souls, I am the sage Kapila.

Ucchaiṣṛavasam aśvānāṃ viddhi mām amṛtodbhavam |
airāvataṃ gajendrāṇāṃ narāṇāṃ ca narādhipam || 10.27

uccaiṣṛavasam: Uccaishravas; *aśvānāṃ*: of the horses; *viddhi*: know; *mām*: Me; *amṛtodbhavam*: Born of nectar produced from the churning of the ocean; *airāvataṃ*: Airavata; *gajendrāṇāṃ*: of the elephants; *narāṇāṃ*: of men; *ca*: and; *narādhipam*: king

uccaiṣṛavasam: Uccaishravas; *aśvānāṃ*: of the horses; *viddhi*: know; *mām*: Me; *amṛtodbhavam*: Born of nectar produced from the churning of the ocean; *airāvataṃ*: Airavata; *gajendrāṇāṃ*: of the elephants; *narāṇāṃ*: of men; *ca*: and; *narādhipam*: king

10.27 Of the horses, know me to be Uccaishravas born of the nectar generated from the churning of the ocean; Of the elephants, Airavata and of men, the king.

āyudhānāṃ ahaṃ vajraṃ dhenūnāṃ asmi kāmadhuk |
prajānaś cā'smi kandarpaḥ sarpāṇāṃ asmi vāsukiḥ || 10.28

āyudhānāṃ: of the weapons; *ahaṃ*: I am; *vajraṃ*: thunderbolt; *dhenūnāṃ*: of the cows; *asmi*: I am; *kāmadhuk*: Kamadhenu; *prajānaḥ*: for begetting children; *cā*: and; *asmi*: I am; *kandarpaḥ*: god of love; *sarpāṇāṃ*: of the snakes; *asmi*: I am; *vāsukiḥ*: Vasuki

āyudhānāṃ: of the weapons; *ahaṃ*: I am; *vajraṃ*: thunderbolt; *dhenūnāṃ*: of the cows; *asmi*: I am; *kāmadhuk*: Kamadhenu; *prajānaḥ*: for begetting children; *cā*: and; *asmi*: I am; *kandarpaḥ*: god of love; *sarpāṇāṃ*: of the snakes; *asmi*: I am; *vāsukiḥ*: Vasuki

10.28 *Of the weapons, I am the thunderbolt. Of the cows, I am Kamadhenu; For begetting children, I am the god of love. Of the snakes, I am Vasuki.*

āZīVūpn̄ ZmZn̄sdéUmo`nKgm_h_2V̄
{nVUm_`©mMpn̄_`_: g\$ _Vm_h_2V̄ 29

anantaś cā 'smi nāgānām varuṇo yādasām aham |
pitṛnām aryamā cā 'smi yamaḥ saṁyamatām aham || 10.29

anantaḥ: Ananta; *ca*: and; *asmi*: I am; *nāgānām*: of the serpents; *varuṇaḥ*: Varuna; *yādasām*: of the water deities; *aham*: I am; *pitṛnām*: of the ancestors; *aryamā*: Aryama; *ca*: and; *asmi*: I am; *yamaḥ*: Yama; *saṁyamatām*: of the ones who ensure discipline; *aham*: I

10.29 *Of the serpents, I am Ananta. Of the water deities, I am Varuna. Of the ancestors, I am Aryama and of the ones who ensure discipline, I am Yama.*

āṭnKūpn̄_XĒ`nZn̄H\$to: H\$to`Vm_h_2V̄
YUn̄M`YDm̄h\$ZVō ü n{j Um_2V̄ 30V̄

prahlādaś cā 'smi daityānām kālāḥ kalayatām aham |
mṛgāṇām ca mṛgendro 'haṁ vainateyaś ca pakṣiṇām || 10.30

prahlādaḥ: Prahlada; *ca*: and; *asmi*: I am; *daityānām*: of the Daityas; *kālāḥ*: time; *kalayatām*: of the subduers; *aham*: I; *mṛgāṇām*: of the animals; *ca*: and; *mṛgendraḥ*: king of animals; *haṁ*: I; *vainateyaḥ*: Garuda; *ca*: and; *pakṣiṇām*: of the bird

10.30 *Of the Daitya (demons), I am Prahlad and of the reckoners, I am time. Of the animals, I am the king of animals (lion) and of the birds, I am Garuda.*

ndZ: ndVm_pñ_ am_: eó^V_m_h_2V
PfnUnſ_HſaÜnpñ_ ònWgm_pñ_ Om•dr V& 31

pavanaḥ pavatām asmi rāmaḥ śaṣṭrabhṛtām aham |
jhaṣāṇām makaraś cā 'smi srotasām asmi jāhnavī || 10.31

pavanaḥ: wind; *pavatām*: that which purifies; *asmi*: I am; *rāmaḥ*: Rama; *śaṣṭrabhṛtām*: wielders of weapons; *aham*: I; *jhaṣāṇām*: of the water beings; *makaraḥ*: fish; *cā*: and; *asmi*: I am; *srotasām*: of the flowing rivers; *asmi*: I am; *jāhnavī*: Jahnavi (Ganga)

10.31 Of the purifiers, I am the wind. Of the wielders of weapons, I am Rama. Of the water beings, I am the shark and of the flowing rivers, I am Jahnavi (Ganga).

gJnBm_n(XaVÜ _Ü` \$Mphn_OV
AÜ` nE_{dÜm{dÜmZnſdnX: àdXVm_h_2V 32V

sargāṇām ādir antaś ca madhyaṁ cai 'vā 'ham arjuna |
adhyātmavidyā vidyānām vādaḥ pravadatām aham || 10.32

sargāṇām: of all creations; *ādir*: beginning; *antaḥ*: end; *ca*: and; *madhyaṁ*: middle; *ca*: and; *eva*: surely; *aham*: I; *arjuna*: Arjuna; *adhyātmavidyā*: spiritual knowledge; *vidyānām*: of all knowledge; *vādaḥ*: logic; *pravadatām*: of arguments; *aham*:

10.32 Of all creations, I am surely the beginning and end and the middle, Oh Arjuna. Of all knowledge, I am the spiritual knowledge of the Self. Of all arguments, I am the logic.

Aj anUm_Hſanepñ_ ÜYÜ: gm_n(gHſn` M V
Ah_olmj `: HſtOmYnVnhſ{dceVmo_ſ: V& 33V

akṣarāṇām akāro 'smi dvandvaḥ sāmāsikasya ca |
aham evā 'kṣayaḥ kālo dhātā 'ham viśvatomukhaḥ || 10.33

akṣarāṇām: of the letters; *akāraḥ*: The letter A; *asmi*: I am; *dvandvaḥ*: of the dual words; *sāmāsikasya*: compounds; *ca*: and; *aham*: I; *evā*: surely; *akṣayaḥ*: never-ending; *kālo*: time; *dhātā*: creator; *aham*: I; *viśvatomukhaḥ*: faces facing the world (Brahma)

10.33 *Of the letters, I am the 'A'. Of the dual words, I am the compounds and surely I am the never-ending time. I am the Omniscient who sees everything.*

~\w gdfññhSCØdü ^{dî`Vm_2\k
H\$V©I rdnSM ZnarUnñ_V_YmYV: j_m\& 34\

mṛtyuḥ sarvaharaś cā 'ham udbhavaś ca bhaviṣyatām |
kīrtiḥ śrīr vāk ca nārīṇām smṛtir medhā dhṛtiḥ kṣamā || 10.34

mṛtyuḥ: death; *sarvaharaḥ*: all-devouring; *ca*: and; *aham*: I; *udbhavaḥ*: creation; *ca*: and; *bhaviṣyatām*: of the future; *kīrtiḥ*: fame; *śrīr vāk*: beautiful speech; *ca*: and; *nārīṇām*: of the feminine; *smṛtir*: memory; *medhā*: intelligence; *dhṛtiḥ*: faithfulness; *kṣamā*: patience

10.34 *I am the all-devouring death and I am the creator of all things of the future. Of the feminine, I am fame, fortune, beautiful speech, memory, intelligence, faithfulness and patience.*

~ñĒgm_VWmgñZñJmî Īr N\$Xgm_h_2\k
_ngmZñ_n\@rñññh\$F\$VZñHñgwnH\$ñ: \& 35

bṛhatsāma tathā sāmnam gāyatrī chandasām aham |
māsānām mārgaśīrṣo 'ham ṛtūnām kusumākaraḥ || 10.35

bṛhatsāma: Brihat sama; *tathā*: and; *sāmnam*: of the Sama Veda; *gāyatrī*: Gayatri; *chandasām*: of all poetry; *aham*: I; *māsānām*: of the months; *mārgaśīrṣaḥ*: Margashirsh; *aham*: I; *ṛtūnām*: of the seasons; *kusumākaraḥ*: spring

dyūtaṁ chalayatām asmi tejas tejasvinām aham ।

dyūtam: gambling; *chalayātām*: of all cheating; *asmi*: I am; *tejah*: effulgence; *tejasvinām*: of all the effulgent things; *aham*: I; *jayaḥ*: victory; *asmi*: I am; *vyavasāyaḥ*: of all adventure; *asmi*: I am; *sattvaḥ*: strength; *sattvavatām*: of all the strong; *aham*: I

vr̥snīnām vāsudevo 'smi pāṇḍavānām dhanañjayah |

vr̥ṣṇīnām: of the Vrishnis; *vāsudevaḥ:* Vasudeva; *asmi:* I am; *pāṇḍavānām:* of the Pandavas; *dhanañjayaḥ:* Dhananjaya; *munīnām:* of the sages; *api:* also; *aham:* I; *vyāsaḥ:* Vyasa; *kavīnām:* of the thinkers; *uśanā:* Usana; *kaviḥ:* seer

XÊSṁX_`Vm_pñ_ Zr{Vapñ_ {OJrfVm_²ᵛ
mZ\$Mdpñ JwzmZñ\$kmZ\$kmZdVm_h_²ᵛ 38ᵛ

daṇḍo damayatām asmi nītir asmi jigīṣatām |
maunaṁ cai 'vā 'smi guhyānāṁ jñānaṁ jñānavatām aham || 10.38

daṇḍaḥ: rod of punishment; *damayatām*: of all punishments; *asmi*: I am; *nītiḥ*: morality; *asmi*: I am; *jigīṣatām*: of the victorious; *maunaṁ*: silence; *ca*: and; *evā*: also; *asmi*: I am; *guhyānāṁ*: of the secrets; *jñānaṁ*: knowledge; *jñānavatām*: of the wise; *aham*: I

10.38 *Of rulers, I am their sceptre. Of the victorious, I am statesmanship. Of all secrets, I am also silence. Of the wise, I am wisdom.*

`fm{n gdᵛVmZñ~rO\$VXh_Oᵛ ᵛ
Z VxpñV {dZm`Êñ`mᵛ`m^ᵛ\$ManMa_²ᵛ 39ᵛ

yaccāpi sarvabhūtānām bījaṁ tad aham arjuna |
na tad asti vinā yat syān mayā bhūtaṁ carācaram || 10.39

yat: what; *cā*: and; *api*: also; *sarva*: all; *bhūtānām*: beings; *bījaṁ*: seed; *tat*: that; *aham*: I; *arjuna*: Arjuna; *na*: not; *tat*: that; *asti*: is; *vinā*: without; *yat*: that; *syān*: exists; *mayā*: by Me; *bhūtaṁ*: created; *cara*: moving; *acaram*: unmoving

10.39 *Also, of whatever beings exist, I am the seed, Oh Arjuna. There is nothing that exists without Me in all creations, moving and unmoving.*

ZmᵛVmepñV __ {Xi`mZñ\$d^ᵛrZñ\$naᵛVn_ᵛ
Ef VᵛeV: àᵛ\$ᵛ(d^ᵛVᵛdᵛVam_`mᵛ 40ᵛ

nā 'nto 'sti mama divyānām vibhūtīnām parantapa |
eṣa tū 'ddeśataḥ prokto vibhūter vistaro mayā || 10.40

na: not; antaḥ: end; asti: is; mama: My; divyānām: divine; vibhūtīnām: glories; paraṁtapa: Parantapa; eṣa: all this; tu: that; uddeśataḥ: examples; proktaḥ: said; vibhūteḥ: glories; vistaraḥ: detailed; mayā: by Me

10.40 There is no end to My divine glories, Oh Parantapa. What have been said by Me are examples of My detailed glories.

˘Ú{Ů^ŷV_EgId\$Ir_XŷOŷ_d dm&
VÎnKdndJÂN>Ed\$__VOnŷg\$`d_²&& 41Ÿ

yad-yad vibhūtimat sattvaṁ śrīmad ūrjitam eva vā |
tat-tad evā 'vagaccha tvaṁ mama tejomśasambhavam || 10.41

yad-yad: whatever; vibhūtimat: glorious; sattvaṁ: existence; śrīmad: beautiful; ūrjitam: glorious; eva: also; vā: or; tat-tad: all that; eva: surely; avagaccha: you should know; tvaṁ: you; mama: My; tejaḥ: splendour; amśa: part; sambhavam: born of

10.41 You should know that whatever glories exist or whatever beautiful and glorious exists, all that surely is born of just a portion of My splendour.

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{d'ia`nh_XSHŷñZ\$EH\$ŷeZ pñVVmOJV²&& 42

athavā bahunai 'tena kiṁ jñātena tavā 'rjuna |
viṣṭabhyā 'ham idaṁ kṛtsnam ekāmśena sthito jagat || 10.42

athavā: or; bahunā: many; etena: of this kind; kiṁ: what; jñātena: know; tava: you; arjuna: Arjuna; viṣṭabhya: full; aham: I; idaṁ: this; kṛtsnam: of all manifestations; eka: one; amśena: part; sthito: situated; jagat: world

10.42 *Of what use is to know about the many manifestations of this kind, Oh Arjuna? I pervade this entire world with just a part of Myself.*

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iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre
śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde vibhūti yogo nāma daśamo 'dhyāyaḥ ||

*In the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of **Brahman**, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the tenth discourse designated:*

Vibhūthi Yogaḥ

Verses Of Gita Chapter 11

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Viśvarūpa darśana yogaḥ

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Arjuna uvāca

madanugrahāya paramaṁ guhyam adhyātmasaṁjñitam |

yat tvayo 'ktaṁ vacas tena moho 'yaṁ vigato mama || 11.1

Arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; *madanugrahāya:* out of compassion for me; *paramaṁ:* supreme; *guhyaṁ:* confidential; *adhyātma:* spiritual; *saṁjñitam:* in the matter of; *yat:* what; *tvayā:* by You; *uktaṁ:* said; *vacas:* words; *tena:* by that; *mohaḥ:* delusion; *ayaṁ:* this; *vigataḥ:* removed; *mama:* my

11.1 Arjuna says: 'O Lord! By listening to Your wisdom on the supreme secret of Existence and your glory, I feel that my delusion has disappeared.'

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bhavāpyayau hi bhūtānām śrutau vistaraśo mayā |

tvattaḥ kamalapatrākṣa mähātmyam api cā 'vyayam || 11.2

bhava: creation; *apyayau:* dissolution; *hi:* certainly; *bhūtānām:* of all living entities; *śrutau:* have heard; *vistaraśaḥ:* detail; *mayā:* by me; *tvattaḥ:* from You; *kamalapatrākṣa:* O lotus-eyed one; *mähātmyam:* glories; *api:* also; *cā:* and; *avyayam:* inexhaustible

11.2 O Krishna! I have heard from you about the creation and destruction of all beings, Also, Your inexhaustible greatness.

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*evaṁ etad yathā 'ttha tvam ātmānaṁ parameśvara |
 draṣṭum icchāmi te rūpaṁ aiśvaraṁ puruṣottama || 11.3*

evaṁ: thus; *etat*: this; *yathā*: as it is; *āttha*: have spoken; *tvam*: You; *ātmānaṁ*: the soul; *parameśvara*: the Supreme Lord; *draṣṭum*: to see; *icchāmi*: I wish; *te*: You; *rūpaṁ*: form; *aiśvaraṁ*: divine; *puruṣottama*: best of manifested forms

11.3 Purushottama! You have declared what You are, O Lord supreme, I wish to see the divine form of yours.

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*manyase yadi tac chakyaṁ mayā draṣṭum iti prabho |
 yogeśvara tato me tvam darśayā 'tmānam avyayam || 11.4*

manyase: You think; *yadi*: if; *tat*: that; *śakyaṁ*: able; *mayā*: by me; *draṣṭum*: to see; *iti*: thus; *prabho*: O Lord; *yogeśvara*: O Lord of all mystic power; *tataḥ*: then; *me*: unto me; *tvam*: You; *darśaya*: show; *ātmānaṁ*: Yourself; *avyayaṁ*: imperishable

11.4 If you think it is possible for me to see it, then please, O Lord of Yoga and all mystic power, show me Your form of eternal universal Self.

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*Srī bhagavān uvāca
 paśya me pārtha rūpāṇi śataśo 'tha sahasraśaḥ |
 nānāvidhāni divyāni nānāvarṇākṛtīni ca || 11.5*

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Krishna said; *paśya*: behold; *me*: Mine; *pārtha*: arjuna; *rūpāṇi*: forms; *śataśaḥ*: hundreds; *atha*: also; *sahasraśaḥ*: thousands; *nānāvidhāni*: of different nature; *divyāni*: divine; *nānā*: various; *varṇa*: colors; *ākṛtīni*: shapes; *ca*: also

11.5 Bhagavān said: O Paartha, behold my hundreds and thousands of forms, Of different divine sorts, of various colors and shapes.

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paśyā 'dityān vasūn rudrān aśvinau marutaḥ tathā |
bahūnyadr̥ṣṭapūrvāṇi paśyāścaryāṇi bhārata || 11.6

paśya: see; adityān: the twelve sons of Aditi; vasūn: the eight Vasus; rudrān: the eleven forms of Rudra; aśvinau: the two Asvinis; marutaḥ: the forty-nine Maruts (wind deities); tathā: also; bahūni: many; adr̥ṣṭa: that you have never seen; pūrvāṇi: before; paśya: see; āścaryāṇi: wonderful; bhārata: O best of the Bharatas

11.6 O Bharata, see the Aditya, the Vasu, the Rudra, the Ashwin, the Marut and many wonders you have never seen before.

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__XhoJ̐S̐H̐ē`f̐m̐`X̐D̐i̐Ē̐AN̐g̐&& 7

ihai 'kasthaṁ jagat kṛtsnaṁ paśyā 'dya sacarācaram |
mama dehe guḍākeśa yac cā 'nyad draṣṭum icchasi || 11.7

iha: in this; ekasthaṁ: situated in one; jagat: the universe; kṛtsnaṁ: whole; paśya: see; adya: now; sa: with; carā: moving; acaram: not moving; mama: My; dehe: in this body; guḍākeśa: O Arjuna; yat: that; ca: also; anyat: other; draṣṭum: to see; icchasi: you like

11.7 O Arjuna, now in My body, all the moving and the unmoving, whatever else you wish to see, everything integrated into this body.

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na tu mām śakyase draṣṭum anenai 'va svacakṣuṣā |
divyaṁ dadāmi te cakṣuḥ paśya me yogam aiśvaram || 11.8

na: never; tu: but; mām: Me; śakyase: able; draṣṭum: to see; anena: by this; eva: certainly; svacakṣuṣā: with your own eyes; divyaṁ: divine; dadāmi: I give; te: you; cakṣuḥ: eyes; paśya: see; me: My; yogam aiśvaram: divine powers

11.8 But you cannot see Me with these your physical eyes. Let Me give you the divine eye; behold my divine power.

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Sañjaya uvāca
evam uktvā tato rājan mahāyogeśvaro hariḥ |
darśayāmāsa pāṛthāya paramaṁ rūpam aiśvaram || 11.9

Sañjaya uvāca: Sanjaya said; evam: thus; uktvā: saying; tataḥ: thereafter; rājan: O King; mahāyogeśvaraḥ: the great Lord of Yoga; hariḥ: Krishna; darśayāmāsa: showed; pāṛthāya: to Arjuna; paramaṁ: divine; rūpam: form; aiśvaram: opulences

11.9 Sanjaya said: O King, having spoken thus, the great Lord of Yoga, Krishna, showed to Arjuna His supreme cosmic form.

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aneka vaktra nayanam anekādbhuta darśanam |
aneka divyābharaṇaṁ divyānekodyatāyudham || 11.10

aneka: various; vaktra: mouths; nayanam: eyes; aneka: various; adbhuta: wonderful; darśanam: sights; aneka: many; divya: divine; ābharaṇaṁ: ornaments; divya: divine; aneka: various; udyata: uplifted; āyudham: weapons

11.10 Numerous mouths and eyes, with numerous wonderful sights, numerous divine ornaments, with numerous divine weapons uplifted.

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gdmā`_`\$Xol_ZYV\$(dœVnol_& 11

divya mālyāmbara dharaṁ divya gandhānulepanam |
sarvāścaryamayam devam anantaṁ viśvatomukham || 11.11

divya: divine; *mālya:* garlands; *ambara dharaṁ:* covered with the dresses; *divya:* divine; *gandha:* fragrance; *anulepanam:* smeared; *sarva:* all; *aścaryamayam:* wonderful; *devam:* shining; *anantaṁ:* endless; *viśvatomukham:* with faces on all sides

11.11 Arjuna saw this universal form wearing divine garlands and clothing, anointed with celestial fragrances, wonderful, resplendent, endless, with faces on all sides.

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divi sūrya sahasrasya bhaved yugapad utthitā |
yadi bhāḥ sadṛśī sā syād bhāsastasya mahātmanaḥ || 11.12

divi: in the sky; *sūrya:* sun; *sahasrasya:* of many thousands; *bhaved:* there were; *yugapad:* simultaneously; *utthitā:* present; *yadi:* if; *bhāḥ:* splendor; *sadṛśī:* like; *sā:* that; *syād:* may be; *bhāsaḥ:* effulgence; *tasya:* there is; *mahātmanaḥ:* of the great Lord

11.12 If the splendor of a thousand suns were to blaze all together in the sky, it would be like the splendor of that mighty Being.

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tatrai 'kastham jagat kṛtsnam pravibhaktam anekadhā |
apaśyad devadevasya śarīre pāṇḍavas tadā || 11.13

tatra: there; *ekastham:* in one place; *jagat:* universe; *kṛtsnam:* completely; *pravibhaktam:* divided in; *anekadhā:* many groups; *apaśyat:* saw; *devadevasya:* God of gods; *śarīre:* in the body; *pāṇḍavaḥ:* Arjuna; *tadā:* at that time

11.13 *There, in the body of the God of gods, the Pandava then saw the whole universe resting in one, with all its infinite parts.*

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tataḥ sa vismayāviṣṭo hr̥ṣṭaromā dhanañjayaḥ |
praṇamya śīrasā devaṁ kṛtāñjalir abhāṣata || 11.14

tataḥ: thereafter; saḥ: he; vismayāviṣṭaḥ: being overwhelmed with wonder; hr̥ṣṭaromā: with his bodily hair standing on end; dhanañjayaḥ: Arjuna; praṇamya: offering obeisances; śīrasā: with the head; devaṁ: to God; kṛtāñjaliḥ: with folded palms; abhāṣata: said

11.14 *Dhananjaya, filled with wonder, his hair standing on end, then bowed his head to the God and spoke with joined palms.*

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arjuna uvāca

paśyāmi devāṁs tava deva dehe sarvāṁs tathā bhūta viśeṣa saṅghān |
brahmāṇam īśaṁ kamalāsanastham ṛṣīṁs ca sarvān uragāṁs ca divyān || 11.15

arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; paśyāmi: I see; devāṁs: all the gods; tava: Your; deva: O Lord; dehe: in the body; sarvāṁs: all; tathā: also; bhūta: living entities; viśeṣa saṅghān: specifically assembled; brahmāṇam: Brahma; īśaṁ: Lord; kamalāsanastham: sitting on the lotus flower; ṛṣīṁs: great sages; ca: also; sarvān: all; uragāṁs: serpents; ca: also; divyān: divine

11.15 *Arjuna said; O God, I see all the gods in Your body and many types of beings. Brahma, the Lord of creation seated on the lotus, all the sages and celestial serpents.*

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aneka bāhūdara vaktra netraṁ paśyāmi tvām sarvato 'nantarūpam |
nā 'ntaṁ na madhyaṁ na punas tava 'diṁ paśyāmi viśveśvara viśvarūpa || 11.16

aneka: many; bāhu: arms; udara: bellies; vaktra: mouths; netraṁ: eyes; paśyāmi: I see; tvām: unto You; sarvataḥ: from all sides; anantarūpam: endless form; nā 'ntaṁ: there is no end; na madhyaṁ: there is no middle; na punaḥ: nor again; tava: Your; ādiṁ: beginning; paśyāmi: I see; viśveśvara: O Lord of the universe; viśvarūpa: in the form of the universe

11.16 I see Your infinite form on every side, with many arms, stomachs, mouths and eyes; Neither the end, nor the middle nor the beginning do I see, O Lord of the Universe, O cosmic form.

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kirīṭinaṁ gadināṁ cakriṇaṁ ca tejorāśiṁ sarvato dīptimantam |
paśyāmi tvām durnirikṣyaṁ samantād dīptānalārkadyutim aprameyam || 11 .17

kirīṭinaṁ: with helmets; gadināṁ: with maces; cakriṇaṁ: with discs; ca: and; tejorāśiṁ: radiance; sarvataḥ: all sides; dīptimantam: glowing; paśyāmi: I see; tvām: You; durnirikṣyaṁ: difficult to see; samantāt: spreading; dīptānala: blazing fire; arka: sun; dyutim: sunshine; aprameyam: immeasurable

11.17 I see You with crown, club and discus; a mass of radiance shining everywhere, difficult to look at, blazing all round like the burning fire and sun in infinite brilliance.

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tvam akṣaraṁ paramaṁ veditavyaṁ tvam asya viśvasya paraṁ nidhānam |
tvam avyayaḥ śāsvata dharma goptā sanātanas tvam puruṣo mato me || 11.18

tvam: You; akṣaram: inexhaustible; paramam: supreme; veditavyam: to be understood; tvam: You; asya: of this; viśvasya: of the universe; param: supreme; nidhānam: basis; tvam: You are; avyayaḥ: inexhaustible; śāśvata dharma goptā: maintainer of the eternal religion; sanātanaḥ: eternal; tvam: You; puruṣaḥ: supreme personality; mato me: is my opinion

11.18 You are the imperishable; the supreme being worthy to be known. You are the great treasure house of this universe. You are the imperishable protector of the eternal order. I believe You are the eternal being.

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anādi madhyāntam ananta vīryam ananta bāhum śaśi sūrya netram |
paśyāmi tvām dīpta hutāśa vaktraṁ svatejasā viśvam idaṁ tapantam || 11.19

anādi: without beginning; madhya: middle; antam: end; ananta: unlimited; vīryam: glorious; ananta: unlimited; bāhum: arms; śaśi: moon; sūrya: sun; netram: eyes; paśyāmi: I see; tvām: You; dīpta: blazing; hutāśa vaktraṁ: fire coming out of Your mouth; svatejasā: by Your; viśvam: this universe; idaṁ: this; tapantam: heating

11.19 I see you without a beginning, middle or end, infinite in power and many arms, The sun and the moon being Your eyes, the blazing fire your mouth, the whole universe scorched by Your radiance.

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dyāvapṛthivyor idaṁ antaraṁ hi vyāptaṁ tvayai 'kena diśaś ca sarvāḥ |
dṛṣṭvādbhutaṁ rūpaṁ ugraṁ tvedaṁ lokatrayaṁ pravyathitaṁ mahātman || 11.20

dyāvā: in outer space; pṛthivyoh: of the earth; idaṁ: this; antaraṁ: unlimited; hi: certainly; vyāptaṁ: pervaded; tvaya: by You; ekena: by one; diśaḥ: directions; ca: and; sarvāḥ: all; dṛṣṭvā: by seeing; adbhutaṁ: wonderful; rūpaṁ: form; ugraṁ: terrible; tava: Your; idaṁ: this; loka: three world; trayaṁ: three; pravyathitaṁ: perturbed; mahātman: O great one

11.20 *This space between earth and the heavens and everything is filled by You alone. O great Being, having seen Your wonderful and terrible form, the three worlds tremble with fear.*

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ñdñVrĒ`w\$dm_h{ffgÖg"m ñVmpV ĒdnñV{^: nñH\$om^: && 21

*amī hi tvām surasaṁghā viśanti kecid bhītāḥ prāñjalayo grṇanti |
svastī 'ty uktvā maharṣi siddhasaṁghāḥ stuvanti tvām stutibhiḥ puṣkalābhiḥ || 11.21*

amī: all those; *hi*: certainly; *tvām*: unto You; *surasaṁghā*: groups of celestials; *viśanti*: entering; *kecit*: some of them; *bhītāḥ*: out of fear; *prāñjalayaḥ*: with folded hands; *grṇanti*: offering prayers unto; *svastī*: all peace; *iti*: thus; *uktvā*: speaking like that; *maharṣi*: great sages; *siddhasaṁghāḥ*: realized sages; *stuvanti*: singing hymns; *tvām*: unto You; *stutibhiḥ*: with hymns; *puṣkalābhiḥ*: sublime

11.21 *Many celestials enter into You; some praise You in fear with folded hands; many great masters and sages hail and adore you.*

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JYd©j ng{gÖgLKm drj YVoĒdn{dpñ_Vmüp gd}&& 22

*rudrādityā vasavo ye ca sādhyā viśve 'śvinau marutaś co 'ṣmapās ca |
gandharva yakṣāsura siddha saṅghā vīkṣante tvam vismitās cai 'va sarve || 11.22*

rudra: manifestations of Lord Siva; *ādityāḥ*: the Aditya; *vasavaḥ*: the Vasu; *ye*: all those; *ca*: and; *sādhyāḥ*: the Sadhya; *viśve*: the Visvedeva; *aśvinau*: the Asvini-kumara; *marutaḥ*: the Marut; *ca*: and; *uṣmapāḥ*: the forefathers; *ca*: and; *gandharva*: of the Gandharva; *yakṣa*: the Yaksha; *asura siddha*: the demons and the perfected demigods; *saṅghāḥ*: assemblies; *vīkṣante*: are seeing; *tvām*: You; *vismitāḥ*: in wonder; *ca*: also; *eva*: certainly; *sarve*: all

11.22 *The Rudra, Aditya, Vasu, Sadhya, Vishvadeva, Ashwin, Marut, Ushmapa and a host of Gandharva, Yaksha, Asura and Sidhha are all looking at You in amazement.*

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~hXaś~hṇṣīhṣamōśNīYō&ābmbśm ài`{WVnñVWnh_& 23

*rūpaṁ mahat te bahu vaktra netraṁ mahābāho bahu bāhūru pādam |
bahūdaraṁ bahu daṁṣṭrākaraṁ dr̥ṣṭvā lokāḥ pravyathitās tathā 'ham || 11.23*

rūpaṁ: form; *mahat*: very great; *te*: of You; *bahu*: many; *vaktra*: faces; *netraṁ*: eyes; *mahābāho*: O mighty-armed one; *bahu*: many; *bāhu*: arms; *ūru*: thighs; *pādam*: legs; *bahūdaraṁ*: many bellies; *bahu daṁṣṭrā*: many teeth; *karālaṁ*: horrible; *dr̥ṣṭvā*: seeing; *lokāḥ*: all the world; *pravyathitāḥ*: perturbed; *tathā*: similarly; *aham*: I

11.23 Having seen Your immeasurable form with many mouths and eyes, with many arms, thighs and feet, with many stomachs and frightening tusks, O mighty-armed, the worlds are terrified and so am I.

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*nabhaḥ spr̥śaṁ dīptam aneka varṇaṁ vyāttānanaṁ dīpta viśāla netraṁ |
dr̥ṣṭvā hi tvāṁ pravyathitāntarātmā dhṛtīm na vindāmi śamaṁ ca viṣṇo || 11.24*

nabhaḥ spr̥śaṁ: touching the sky; *dīptam*: glowing; *aneka*: many; *varṇaṁ*: color; *vyāttā*: open; *ananaṁ*: mouth; *dīpta*: shining; *viśāla*: very great; *netraṁ*: eyes; *dr̥ṣṭvā*: by seeing; *hi*: certainly; *tvāṁ*: You; *pravyathita*: perturbed; *antarātmā*: soul; *dhṛtīm*: steadiness; *na*: no; *vindāmi*: find; *śamaṁ*: peace; *ca*: also; *viṣṇo*: O Lord Visnu

11.24 Seeing You, Your form touching the sky, flaming in many colors, mouths wide open, large fiery eyes, O Vishnu, I find neither courage nor peace; I am frightened.

ḌśñHśamō{Z M Vo_ñ mZ NīYō&HśmōZbg{P^ñZ&
{XemZ OmZōZ b^oM e_āgrX Xole OJ{Pdmg& 25

*daṁṣṭrākaraṁ ca te mukhāni dr̥ṣṭvai 'va kālānalasannibhāni |
dīśo na jāne na labhe ca śarma prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa || 11.25*

damṣṭrā: teeth; *karālāni*: like that; *ca*: also; *te*: Your; *mukhāni*: faces; *drṣṭvā*: seeing; *eva*: thus; *kālānala*: the fire of death; *sannibhāni*: as if blazing; *diśaḥ*: directions; *na jāne*: do not know; *na labhe*: nor obtain; *ca śarma*: and grace; *prasīda*: be pleased; *deveśa*: O Lord of all lords; *jagannivāsa*: refuge of the worlds

11.25 *Having seen your fearsome mouths with blazing tusks like the fire of the end of the universe, I know not the four directions nor do I find peace. O Lord of the Deva, O refuge of the Universe, be gracious.*

A_r M ĒdnŸYVamīā` nām gd)ghpnd(Znmbg"ĩ&
^rī_mDnU: gVnāñVWngmghnā_Xr` p{n `nā_ũ`ĩ&& 26

amī ca tvām dhṛtarāṣṭrasya putrāḥ sarve sahai 'vā 'vanipālasaṁghaiḥ |
bhīṣmo droṇaḥ sūtaputras tathāsau sahāsmadīyair api yodhamukhyaiḥ || 11.26

amī: all those; *ca*: also; *tvām*: You; *dhṛtarāṣṭrasya*: of Dhritarastra; *putrāḥ*: sons; *sarve*: all; *sahaiva*: along with; *avanipāla*: warrior kings; *saṁghaiḥ*: the groups; *bhīṣm*: Bhismadeva; *droṇaḥ*: Dronacarya; *sūtaputraḥ*: Karna; *tathā*: also; *asau*: that; *saha*: with; *asmadīyaiḥ*: our; *api*: also; *yodhamukhyaiḥ*: chief among the warriors

11.26 *All the sons of Dhritharashtra with many kings of the earth, Bhishma, Drona, the son of the charioteer, Karna, with our warrior chieftains.*

dŠĪn(U VoĒda_mUm{depV XŸnHŠantmZ ^`mZHŠmZĩ&
HŸM{Ūb¾amXeZnVafw gŸr`VVoMŸUVpĪm_m"ĩ&& 27

vaktrāṇi te tvaramāṇa viśanti damṣṭrākarālāni bhayānakāni |
kecid vilagnā daśanāntareṣu saṁdrśyante cūrṇitair uttamāṅgaiḥ || 11.27

vaktrāṇi: mouths; *te*: Your; *tvaramāṇa*: hurrying; *viśanti*: entering; *damṣṭrā*: teeth; *karālāni*: terrible; *bhayānakāni*: very fearful; *kecid*: some of them; *vilagnā*: being attacked; *daśanāntareṣu*: between the teeth; *saṁdrśyante*: found; *cūrṇitaiḥ*: crushed; *uttamāṅgaiḥ*: by the head

11.27 *Into Your mouths with terrible tusks, fearful to behold, they enter. Some are seen caught in the gaps between the tusks and their heads crushed.*

WmZXrZn~hdnēā~ldm g_0_dmf^_m mēdpVv
VWmVdm_r ZabmSdram{depV dHnE`^{dAdbpVv& 28

yathā nadīnām bahavo 'mbuvegāḥ samudram evā 'bhimukhādravanti |
tathā tavāmī naralokavīrā viśanti vaktrāṇyabhivijvalanti || 11.28

yathā: as; nadīnām: of the rivers; bahavaḥ: many; ambuvegāḥ: waves of the waters; samudram: ocean; eva: certainly; abhimukhāḥ: towards; dravanti: gliding; tathā: similarly; tava: Your; amī: all those; naralokavīrāḥ: the human kings; viśanti: entering; vaktrāṇi: into the mouths; abhivijvalanti: blazing

11.28 Even as many torrents of rivers flow towards the ocean, so too these warriors in the world of men enter Your flaming mouths.

WmàXrā\$AdbZ\$nv"m{depV Zmem g_0d0m
VWp Zmem {depV bmb\$nvdmn dSImU g_0d0m& 29

yathā pradīptam jvalanam pataṅgā viśanti nāśāya samṛddhavegāḥ |
tathai 'va nāśāya viśanti lokās tavā 'pi vaktrāṇi samṛddhavegāḥ || 11.29

yathā: as; pradīptam: blazing; jvalanam: fire; pataṅgāḥ: moths; viśanti: enters; nāśāya: destruction; samṛddha: full; vegāḥ: speed; tathai 'va: similarly; nāśāya: for destruction; viśanti: entering; lokāḥ: all people; tava: unto You; api: also; vaktrāṇi: in the mouths; samṛddhavegāḥ: with full speed

11.29 Just as moths hurriedly rush into the fire for their own destruction, So too these creatures rush hastily into Your mouths of destruction.

b0b0goJg_mZ: g_VVm, mb\$ng_JwXZAdB[0:0
V0m^amY 0JfEg_J\$^ngnVdmn àVnpV {dUUn& 30

lelihyase grasamānaḥ samantāl lokān samagrān vadanair jvaladbhiḥ |
tejobhirāpūrya jagat samagram bhāsastavo 'grāḥ paratapanti viṣṇo || 11.30

lelihyase: licking; *grasamānaḥ*: devouring; *samantāt*: from all directions; *lokān*: people; *samagrān*: completely; *vadanaiḥ*: by the mouth; *jvaladbhiḥ*: with blazing; *tejobhiḥ*: by effulgence; *āpūrya*: covering; *jagat*: the universe; *samagram*: all; *bhāsas*: illuminating; *tava*: Your; *ugrāḥ*: terrible; *paratapanti*: scorching; *viṣṇo*: O all pervading Lord

11.30 *Swallowing all worlds on every side with your flaming mouths You lick in enjoyment. O Vishnu, Your fierce rays are burning, filling the whole world with radiance.*

Am»`n`h_oH\$no^dnZwē\$noZ_nēnVwVoXolda àgrXV
{dknVw_ÀNaf_ ^dYV_mU\$Z {h àOmZm_ Vd àdYIm_ 31

ākhyāhi me ko bhavān ugrarūpo namo 'stu te devavara prasīda |
vijñātum icchāmi bhavantam ādyam na hi prajānāmi tava pravṛttim || 11.31

ākhyāhi: please explain; *me*: unto me; *kaḥ*: who; *bhavān*: You; *ugrarūpaḥ*: fierce form; *namaḥ astu*: obeisances; *te*: unto You; *devavara*: the great one amongst the gods; *prasīda*: be gracious; *vijñātum*: just to know; *icchāmi*: I wish; *bhavantam*: You; *ādyam*: the original; *na*: never; *hi*: certainly; *prajānāmi*: do I know; *tava*: Your; *pravṛttim*: purpose

11.31 *Tell me who You are, so fierce in form; salutations to You, O Supreme; have mercy. Indeed I know not Your purpose but I desire to know You, the Original Being.*

I r ^JdmZdmM
H\$nbmepñ_ bmb\$`H\$ādŌmbmb\$Z²g_nhV@h àdYmV
F\$V@n Edn\$Z ^{dî`pîV gd}`edpñVWm àE`ZrH@fw`nVm 32

Śrī bhagavān uvāca
kālo 'smi lokakṣayakṛt pravṛddho lokān samāhartum iha pravṛttaḥ |
rte 'pi tvām na bhaviṣyanti sarve ye 'vasthitāḥ pratyānīkeṣu yodhāḥ || 11.32

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Krishna said; *kālaḥ*: time; *asmi*: I am; *loka*: the worlds; *kṣayakṛt*: destroyer; *pravṛddhaḥ*: to engage; *lokān*: all people; *samāhartum*: to destroy; *iha*: in this

world; *pravṛttaḥ*: to engage; *ṛte 'pi*: without even; *tvām*: you; *na*: never; *bhaviṣyanti*: will be; *sarve*: all; *ye*: who; *avasthitāḥ*: situated; *pratyānīkeṣu*: on the opposite side; *yodhāḥ*: the soldiers

11.32 Sri Bhagavān said: I am the mighty world-destroying Time, I am now destroying the worlds. Even without you, none of the warriors standing in the hostile armies shall live.

Vñ_nīd_Ŵō>`emb^ñd {OĒdmeĴ^2^Lāid anĀ`\$g_Ŵ_Ŵ
_`pĴv{ZhVm nĴ©d {Z{Ĵm_mĴ\$^d gī`gm(MZŴ && 33

*tasmāt tvam uttiṣṭha yaśo labhasva jtvā śatrūn bhuñkṣva rājyaṁ samṛddham ।
mayai 'vai 'te nihatāḥ pūrvam eva nimittamātraṁ bhava savyasācin ॥ 11.33*

tasmāt: therefore; *tvam*: you; *uttiṣṭha*: get up; *yaśaḥ*: fame; *labhasva*: gain; *jtvā*: conquering; *śatrūn*: enemies; *bhuñkṣva*: enjoy; *rājyaṁ*: kingdom; *saṁṛddham*: flourishing; *maya*: by Me; *eva*: certainly; *ete*: all these; *nihatāḥ*: already killed; *pūrvameva*: by previous arrangement; *nimittamātraṁ*: just an instrument; *bhava*: become; *savyasācin*: O Arjuna (one who can use both the hands equally)

11.33 Get up and gain glory. Conquer the enemies and enjoy the prosperous kingdom. I have slain all these warriors; you are a mere instrument, Arjuna.

ĒnĴ\$M ^rĴ_ŴM O`ĒW\$M H\$U^VWmĴ`mZ{n`nĴdranzŴ
_`mhVnĴĒd\$O{h_mĴ`{Wōm`Ŵ`ñd OŴmĴg aUognĒZmZŴ && 34

*droṇaṁ ca bhīṣmaṁ ca jayadrathaṁ ca karnaṁ tathā 'nyān api yodhavīrān ।
mayā hatāmstvaṁ jahi mā vyathiṣṭā yudhyasva jetāsi raṇe sapatnān ॥ 11.34*

droṇaṁ ca: also Drona; *bhīṣmaṁ ca*: also Bhisma; *jayadrathaṁ ca*: also Jayadratha; *karnaṁ*: also Karna; *tathā*: also; *anyān*: others; *api*: certainly; *yodhavīrān*: great warriors; *mayā*: by Me; *hatām*: already killed; *tvam*: you; *jahi*: become victorious; *mā*:

never; *vyathiṣṭā*: be disturbed; *yudhyasva*: just fight; *jetāsi*: just conquer; *raṇe*: in the fight; *śapatnān*: enemies

11.34 Drona, Bheeshma, Jayadratha, Karna and other brave warriors have already been slain by Me; destroy them. Do not be afraid; fight and you shall conquer your enemies in battle.

gÄO` CdmM
EVÄN\$dmMZ\$Hedn` H\$WnÄO{bdh_nZ: {H\$äOÄk
Z_nHÄEdm^y Edmh H\$U\$gJÖX\$^rV^rV: àUä` 35

sañjaya uvāca
etacchrutvā vacanam keśavasya kṛtāñjalir vepamānaḥ kirīṭi |
namaskṛtvā bhūya evāha kṛṣṇam sagadgadaṁ bhītabhītaḥ praṇamya || 11.35

sañjaya uvāca: Sanjaya said; *etat*: thus; *śrutvā*: hearing; *vacanam*: speech; *keśavasya*: of Krishna; *kṛtāñjaliḥ*: with folded hands; *vepamānaḥ*: trembling; *kirīṭi*: Arjuna; *namaskṛtvā*: offering obeisances; *bhūya*: again; *eva*: also; *āha kṛṣṇam*: said unto Krishna; *sagadgadaṁ*: faltering; *bhītabhīta*: fearful; *praṇamya*: offering obeisances

11.35 Sanjaya said: Having heard this speech of Kesava, the crowned Arjuna with joined palms, trembling, prostrating himself, again addressed Krishna, voice choking, bowing down, overwhelmed with fear.

AOÄ CdmM
ñWmZöfrHöe Vd àH\$E` mOJÄäöi` È` ZmÄ` VoMk
aj nfg ^rVmZ {XemDdpV gdZ_n` pV M {gÖgLKm 36

arjuna uvāca
sthāne hṛṣikeśa tava prakīrtyā jagat prahr̥ṣyatyanurajyate ca |
rakṣāṁsi bhītāni diśo dravanti sarve namasyanti ca siddhasaṅghāḥ || 11.36

arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; *sthāne*: rightly; *hṛṣikeśa*: O master of all senses; *tava*: Your; *prakīrtyā*: glories; *jagat*: the entire world; *prahr̥ṣyati*: rejoicing; *anurajyate*: becoming

attached; ca: and; rakṣāṁsi: the demons; bhītāni: out of fear; diśaḥ: directions; dravanti: fleeing; sarve: all; namasyanti: offering respect; ca: also; siddhasaṅghāḥ: the perfect human beings

11.36 Arjuna said: O Hrishikesa, it is but right that the world delights and rejoices in Your praise. Rakshasas fly in fear in all directions and all hosts of sages bow to You.

Ḥṣṇṁf VoZ Z_āṽ_hnē_Z²Jar`go~Umeß`m(XHŠ)Ṛ
AZIV Xolē OJ{Pdmg Ēd_j a\$gXgĪnēna\$`VṚ& 37

*kasmācca te na nameran mahātman gariyase brahmaṇo 'pyādikartre |
ananta deveśa jagannivāsa tvam akṣaram sad asat tat param yat || 11.37*

kasmāt: why; ca: also; te: unto You; na: not; nameran: offer proper obeisances; mahātman: O great one; gariyase: You are better than; brahmaṇaḥ: Brahma; api: although; ādikartre: the supreme creator; ananta: unlimited; deveśa: God of the gods; jagannivāsa: O refuge of the universe; tvam: You are; akṣaram: imperishable; sad asat: cause and effect; tat param: transcendental; yat: because

11.37 And why should they not bow to Thee, O great soul, greater than all else, the Creator of even Brahma the Creator. O Lord of Lords, O infinite Being, O Abode of the Universe, You are the imperishable, that which is beyond both seen and the unseen.

Ēd_mXXol: nēf: nmUnĒd_n`{dceñ`na\$(ZYmZ_Ṛ
dōm{g dū\$M na\$M Ym_Ēd`mVV\$(dce_ZIVē\$Ṛ& 38

*tvam ādidevaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇas tvam asya viśvasya param nidhānam |
vettā 'si vedyam ca param ca dhāma tvayā tataṁ viśvamananta rūpa || 11.38*

tvam: You; ādidevaḥ: the original supreme God; puruṣaḥ: personality; purāṇaḥ: old; tvam: You; asya: this; viśvasya: universe; param: transcendental; nidhānam: refuge; vettā:

knower; *asi*: You are; *vedyaṁ ca*: and the knowable; *paraṁ ca*: and transcendental; *dhāma*: refuge; *tvayā*: by You; *tataṁ*: pervaded; *viśvam*: universe; *ananta rūpa*: unlimited form

11.38 *You are the primal God, the ancient Being, the supreme refuge of the universe. You are the knower and the One to be known. You are the supreme abode. O Being of infinite forms, by You alone is the universe pervaded.*

dm̐ w̐ ॐ ॥ dēU: eem̐ > àOm̐{VñVd\$à{nVm̐_hü̐
Z_m̐Z_n̐VñVghòH̐Ed: n̐Zü̐ ^y̐ n̐(n̐ Z_m̐Z_n̐VñVñ 39

vāyur yamo 'gnir varuṇaḥ śaśāṅkaḥ prajāpatis tvaṁ prapitāmahaś ca |
namo namas te'stu sahasrakṛtvah punaś ca bhūyo 'pi namo namas te || 11.39

vāyuḥ: air; *yamaḥ*: controller; *agniḥ*: fire; *varuṇaḥ*: water; *śaśāṅkaḥ*: moon; *prajāpatiḥ*: Brahma; *tvam̐*: You; *prapitāmahaḥ*: grandfather; *ca*: also; *namaḥ*: offering respects; *namas te*: again my respects unto You; *astu*: are being; *sahasrakṛtvah*: a thousand times; *punaś ca*: and again; *bhūyaḥ*: again; *api*: also; *namaḥ*: offer my respects; *namas te*: offering my respects unto You

11.39 *You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the moon, Prajapati and the great-grandfather of all. Salutations unto You a thousand times and again, salutations unto You!*

Z_: n̐n̐Vm̐KW̐ n̐VñVoZ_n̐n̐Vm̐Vogd̐V̐ Ed gd̐
AZ̐Vdr̐ ॐ V̐{dH̐\$̐ñEd\$gd̐g_n̐Zñf̐ VVm̐(g gd̐ 40

namaḥ purastād atha prṣṭatas te namo 'stu te sarvata eva sarva |
anantavīryāmitavikramastvaṁ sarvaṁ samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvaḥ || 11.40

namaḥ: offering obeisances; *purastāt*: from the front; *atha*: also; *prṣṭataḥ*: from behind; *te*: You; *namo 'stu*: offer my respects; *te*: unto You; *sarvata*: from all sides; *eva sarva*:

because You are everything; *ananta vīrya*: unlimited potency; *amita vikramah*: unlimited force; *tvaṁ*: You; *sarvaṁ*: everything; *samāpnoṣi*: cover; *tato 'si*: therefore You are; *sarvaḥ* : everything

11.40 Salutations to You, before and behind! Salutations to You on every side! O All! Infinite in power and Infinite in prowess, You are everything and everywhere.

gI QV _Ēdmāg^\$`Xm\$hoH\$U ho`nKd hogI QV\$
AOmZVm_{h_nZ\$VdX\$ _`m`à_nXnĒàU`ā dnf(nĒ& 41

sakhe'ti matvā prasabham yad uktam he Kṛṣṇa he yādava he sakhe'ti |
ajānatā mahimānaṁ tave 'dam mayā pramādāt praṇayena vā'pi || 11.41

sakha: friend; *iti*: thus; *matvā*: thinking; *prasabham*: easy familiarity; *yat*: whatever; *uktam*: said; *he Kṛṣṇa*: O Krishna; *he yādava*: O Yadava; *he sakhe'ti*: O my dear friend; *ajānatā*: without knowing; *mahimānaṁ*: glories; *tava*: Your; *idam*: this; *mayā*: by me; *pramādāt*: out of foolishness; *praṇayena*: out of love; *vā'pi*: either

11.41 Whatever I have rashly said from carelessness or love, addressing You as Krishna, Yadava, my friend regarding You merely as a friend, unaware of this greatness of Yours.

`fndhngnW_gEHVn(g {dhmaeæ`ngZ^mDZfĒ
EH\$WdnB`Ä`W VĒg_j \$VĒj m_`oĒdm_h_à_ò_& 42

yac cā 'vahāsārtham asatkṛto 'si vihāra śayyāsana bhojaneṣu |
eko'thava'py acyuta tat samakṣaṁ tat kṣāmaye tvām aham aprameyam || 11.42

yat: whatever; *ca*: also; *avahāsārtham*: for joking; *asatkṛtaḥ*: dishonor; *asi*: have been done; *vihāra*: in relaxation; *śayyā*: in joking; *āsana*: in a resting place; *bhojaneṣu*: or while eating together; *ekaḥ*: alone; *athava*: or; *api*: others; *acyuta*: O infallible one; *tat*

samakṣarīḥ: as Your competitor; *tat*: all those; *kṣāmaye*: excuse; *tvām*: from You; *aham*: I; *aprameyam*: immeasurable

11.42 *In whatever way I may have insulted You in fun, while at play, resting, sitting or at meals, when alone with You or in company, O Achuta, O immeasurable One, I implore You to forgive me.*

{nVn(g bnbhñ` ManMañ` Ēd_n` nĀ` ü JēJā` nZē
Z ĒdĒg_nē` ā` {YH\$: HōVnē` nō bnbhñ` ēb` ā{V_ā`nē 43

Pitā 'si lokasya carācarasya tvam asya pūjyaś ca gurur garīyan |
na tvatsamo'styabhyadhikaḥ kuto 'nyo lokatraye 'py apratima prabhāva || 11.43

Pitā: father; *asi*: You are; *lokasya*: of all the world; *cara*: moving; *acarasya*: nonmoving; *tvam*: You are; *asya*: of this; *pūjyaḥ*: worshipable; *ca*: also; *guruḥ*: master; *garīyan*: glorious; *na*: never; *tvatsamaḥ*: equal to You; *asti*: there is; *abhyadhikaḥ*: greater; *kutaḥ*: how is it possible; *anyo*: other; *lokatraye*: in three planetary systems; *api*: also; *apratima*: immeasurable; *prabhāva*: power

11.43 *You are the father of this world, moving and unmoving. You are to be adored by this world. You are the greatest guru; there is none who exists equal to You. O Being of unequalled power, how then can there be another, superior to You in the three worlds?*

Vñ_nĀUā` ā{UYm` Hññ` šāgnX` oĒdm_h_re_rSē`
{nVd nññ` gI d g»`w {ā` : {ā` m nhĒg Xd gññ` 44

tasmāt praṇamya praṇidhāya kāyaṁ prasādaye tvām aham īsam īdyam |
pite 'va putrasya sakhe 'va sakhyuḥ priyaḥ priyāyā'rhasi deva soḍhum || 11.44

tasmāt: therefore; *praṇamya*: after offering obeisances; *praṇidhāya*: laying down; *kāyaṁ*: body; *prasādaye*: to beg mercy; *tvām*: unto You; *aham*: I; *īsam*: unto the Supreme Lord;

īḍyam: who is worshipable; *pite 'va*: like a father; *putrasya*: of a son; *sakhe 'va*: like a friend; *sakhyuḥ*: of a friend; *priyaḥ*: lover; *priyāya*: of the dearmost; *arhasi*: You should; *deva*: my Lord; *sodhum*: tolerate

11.44 *Therefore, bowing down, I prostrate my body before You and crave Your forgiveness, adorable Lord. Even as a father forgives his son, a friend his friend, a lover his beloved, You should, O Deva, forgive me.*

ANīnd'ô{fVmpñ_ÑY0%`z M ài`{WV\$Zm_&
VXd_oXe© Xd ê\$ñ\$agrX Xdē OJ{Pdmg&& 45

adṛṣṭapūrvam hr̥ṣito 'smi dr̥ṣtvā bhayena ca pravyathitaṁ mano me |
tad eva me darśaya deva rūpaṁ prasīda deveśa jagannivāsa || 11.45

adṛṣṭapūrvam: never seen before; *hr̥ṣito*: gladdened; *asmi*: I am; *dr̥ṣtvā*: by seeing; *bhayena*: out of fear; *ca*: also; *pravyathitaṁ*: perturbed; *mano*: mind; *me*: my; *tad*: therefore; *eva*: certainly; *me*: unto me; *darśaya*: show; *deva*: O Lord; *rūpaṁ*: the form; *prasīda*: just be gracious; *deveśa*: O Lord of lords; *jagannivāsa*: the refuge of the universe

11.45 *After seeing this form that I have never seen before, I am filled with gladness but at the same time I am disturbed by fear. Please bestow Your grace upon me and show me Your form as the supreme personality, O Lord of Lords, O refuge of the Universe.*

{H\$ar{OZ\$J{XZ\$MH\$ñV{_ÀN\$ _Edn\$DîO\$ h\$VWpñ&
VZpd ê\$ñb MVr^DZ ghò~nhm^d {dœ_v}&& 46

kirīṭinaṁ gadināṁ cakrahastam icchāmi tvāṁ draṣṭum ahaṁ tathai'va |
tenai 'va rūpeṇa caturbhujena sahasrabāho bhava viśvamūrte || 11.46

kirīṭinaṁ: with helmet; *gadināṁ*: with club; *cakrahastam*: disc in hand; *icchāmi*: I wish; *tvāṁ*: You; *draṣṭum*: to see; *ahaṁ*: I; *tathai'va*: in that position; *tenai 'va*: by that; *rūpeṇa*: with form; *caturbhujena*: four-handed; *sahasrabāho*: O thousand-handed one; *bhava*: just become; *viśvamūrte*: O universal form

11.46 O thousand armed Universal Form! I wish to see Your form with crown, four- armed with mace, disc in Your hand. I yearn to see You in that form.

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śrī bhagavān uvāca
mayā prasannena tavā 'rjune 'dam rūpaṁ paraṁ darśitam ātmayogāt |
tejomayaṁ viśvam anantam ādyaṁ yan me tvad anyena na dṛṣṭapūrvam || 11.47

śrī bhagavān uvāca: sri bhagavan said; mayā: by Me; prasannena: happily; tava: unto you; arjuna: O Arjuna; idam: this; rūpaṁ: form; paraṁ: transcendental; darśitam: shown; ātmayogāt: by My internal power; tejomayaṁ: full of effulgence; viśvam: the entire universe; anantam: unlimited; ādyaṁ: original; yan me: that which is Mine; tvad anyena: besides you; na dṛṣṭapūrvam: no one has previously seen

11.47 **Bhagavān said:** Dear Arjuna, I happily show you this transcendental form within the material world of My internal power. No one before you has seen this unlimited, brilliant form.

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Edšēn: eŠ` Ah\$ZŦnŦDŦŦEdXY`z HŦēàdraŔ 48Ŧ

na vedayajñādhyayanair na dānair na ca kriyābhir na tapobhirugraiḥ |
evaṁ rūpaḥ śakya ahaṁ nṛloke draṣṭuṁ tvad anyena kurupravīra || 11.48

na: never; veda: Vedic study; yajña: sacrifice; ādhyayanaiḥ: study; na dānaiḥ: by charity; na: never; ca: also; kriyābhiḥ: by pious activities; na tapobhiḥ: by serious penances; ugraiḥ: severe; evaṁ: thus; rūpaḥ: form; śakyaḥ: can be seen; ahaṁ: I; nṛloke: in this material world; draṣṭuṁ: to see; tvad: you; anyena: by another; kurupravīra: O best among the Kuru warriors

11.48 O best among Kuru warriors, no one had ever before seen this Universal form of mine, for neither by studying the Vedas nor by performing sacrifices or charities, can this form be seen. Only you have seen this form.

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 ì`nW^r: àrV_Zm nZñEd\$VXol _oēñ{X\$àní`& 49

*mā te vyathā mā ca vimūḍhabhāvo dṛṣṭvā rūpaṁ ghoram idṛṇ mama'dam |
 vyapetabhīḥ prītamanāḥ punas tvaṁ tad eva me rūpam idaṁ prapaśya || 11.49*

mā: let it not be; *te*: unto you; *vyathā*: trouble; *mā*: let it not be; *ca*: also; *vimūḍhabhāvaḥ*: bewilderment; *dṛṣṭvā*: by seeing; *rūpaṁ*: form; *ghoram*: horrible; *idṛk*: like this; *mama*: My; *idaṁ*: as it is; *vyapetabhīḥ*: just become free from all fear; *prītamanāḥ*: be pleased in mind; *punaḥ*: again; *tvaṁ*: you; *tat*: that; *eva*: thus; *me*: My; *rūpam*: form; *idaṁ*: this; *prapaśya*: just see

11.49 Do not be disturbed any longer by seeing this terrible form of Mine. Dear devotee, be free from all disturbances. With a peaceful mind, you can now see the form you wish to see.

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 Aneng`m_ng M ^rV_Z\$^£dmñZ: gnä`dnwññē_n& 50

sañjaya uvāca

*ityarjunaṁ vāsudevas tatho 'ktvā svakaṁ rūpaṁ darśayāmāsa bhūyaḥ |
 āśvāsayāmāsa ca bhītam enaṁ bhūtvā punaḥ saumya vapur mahātmā || 11.50*

sañjaya uvāca: Sanjaya said; *iti*: thus; *arjunaṁ*: unto Arjuna; *vāsudevaḥ*: Krishna; *tathā*: that way; *uktvā*: saying; *svakaṁ*: His own; *rūpaṁ*: form; *darśayāmāsa*: showed; *bhūyaḥ*: again; *āśvāsayāmāsa*: also convinced him; *ca*: also; *bhītam*: fearful; *enaṁ*: him; *bhūtvā*: becoming again; *saumyavapuḥ*: beautiful form; *mahātmā*: the great one

11.50 Sanjaya said: Krishna, while speaking to Arjuna, revealed His form with four arms, Then assuming His human form He consoled the terrified Arjuna.

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arjuna uvāca

dr̥ṣṭve'daṁ mānuṣaṁ rūpaṁ tava saumyaṁ janārdana ।
idānīm asmi saṁvṛttaḥ sacetāḥ prakṛtiṁ gataḥ ॥ 11.51

arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; dr̥ṣṭve: seeing; idaṁ: this; mānuṣaṁ: human being; rūpaṁ: form; tava: Your; saumyaṁ: very beautiful; janārdana: O chastiser of the enemies; idānīm: just now; asmi: I am; saṁvṛttaḥ: settled; sacetāḥ: in my consciousness; prakṛtiṁ: my own; gataḥ: I am

11.51 Arjuna said: Seeing this wonderful human form, My mind is now calm and I am restored to my original nature.

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śrī bhagavān uvāca

sudurdarśam idaṁ rūpaṁ dṛṣṭavān asi yaṁ mama ।
devā apyasya rūpasya nityaṁ darśana kāṅkṣiṇaḥ ॥ 11.52

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Krishna said; sudurdarśam: very difficult to be seen; idaṁ: this; rūpaṁ: form; dṛṣṭavān asi: as you have seen; yaṁ: which; mama: of Mine; devāḥ: the celestials; apyasya: also this; rūpasya: form; nityaṁ: eternally; darśana kāṅkṣiṇaḥ: always aspire to see

11.52 Bhagavān said: The four-armed form that you have seen is rare to behold. Even the celestials are forever aspiring to see this form.

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nā 'haṁ vedair na tapasā na dānena na ce'jyayā |
śakya evaṁvidho draṣṭuṁ dṛṣṭavān asi mām yathā || 11.53

nā: never; ahaṁ: I; vedaiḥ: by study of the Vedas; na: never; tapasā: by serious penances; na: never; dānena: by charity; na: never; ca: also; ijjayā: by worship; śakyaḥ: it is possible; evaṁvidhaḥ: like this; draṣṭuṁ: to see; dṛṣṭavān: seeing; asi: you are; mām: Me; yathā: as.

11.53 The four armed form which you have seen with your transcendental eyes cannot be understood simply by study of the Vedas, nor by undergoing penances or charity or worship; one cannot see Me as I am by these means.

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bhaktyā tvananyayā śakya aham evaṁvidho 'rjuna |
jñātuṁ draṣṭuṁ ca tattvena praveṣṭuṁ ca parantapa || 11.54

bhaktyā: by devotional service; tu: but; ananyayā: without being mixed with fruitive activities or speculative knowledge; śakyaḥ: possible; aham: I; evaṁvidhaḥ: like this; arjuna: O Arjuna; jñātuṁ: to know; draṣṭuṁ: to see; ca: and; tattvena: in fact; praveṣṭuṁ: and to enter into; ca: also; parantapa: O mighty-armed one

11.54 My dear Arjuna, only by undivided devotional service can you understand Me as I am, standing before you, be seen directly. Only in this way can you reach Me.

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matkarmakṛn matparamo madbhaktaḥ saṅgavarjitah |
nirvairah sarvabhūteṣu yaḥ sa mām eti pāṇḍava || 11.55

matkarmakṛt: engaged in doing My work; matparamaḥ: considering Me the Supreme; madbhaktaḥ: engaged in My devotional service; saṅgavarjitah: freed from the contamination of previous activities and mental speculation; nirvairah: without an enemy;

sarvabhūteṣu: to every living entity; yaḥ: one who; sa: he; mām: unto Me; eti: comes; pāṇḍava: O son of Pandu

11.55 My dear Arjuna, one who is engaged entirely in My devotional service, free from attachment, full of love for every entity, surely comes to Me.

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*iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre
śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde viśvarūpa darśanayogo nāma ekādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ ||*

*In the **Upaniṣad** of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of **Brahman**, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the eleventh discourse designated:*

Viśvarūpa darśana yogaḥ

Verses Of Gita Chapter 12

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^°\$ m̃:

Bhakti Yogaḥ

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arjuna uvāca

*evaṁ satatayuktā ye bhaktās tvām paryupāsate ।
ye cā 'pyakṣaram avyaktaṁ teṣāṁ ke yogavittamāḥ ॥ 12.1*

arjuna uvāca: Arjuna said; *evaṁ:* thus; *satata:* always; *yuktāḥ:* engaged; *ye:* those; *bhaktāḥ:* devotees; *tvām:* you; *paryupāsate:* worship; *ye:* those; *cā:* and; *api:* also; *akṣaram:* imperishable; *avyaktaṁ:* the unmanifest; *teṣāṁ:* of these; *ke:* which; *yogavittamāḥ:* perfect in knowledge of yoga

12.1 Arjuna asked: Who are considered perfect, those who are always engaged sincerely in Your worship in form, or those who worship the imperishable, the invisible formless You?

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śrī bhagavān uvāca

*mayyāveśya mano ye mām nitya yuktā upāsate ।
śraddhayā parayo 'petās te me yuktatamā matāḥ ॥ 12.2*

śrī bhagavān uvāca: Lord Krishna says; *mayi:* on Me; *āveśya:* fixing; *manaḥ:* the mind; *ye:* those; *mām:* Me; *nitya:* eternally; *yuktāḥ:* engaged; *upāsate:* worship; *śraddhayā:*

with faith; *parayaḥ*: supreme; *upetāḥ*: endowed; *te*: these; *me*: by Me; *yuktatamāḥ*: perfect in yoga; *matāḥ*: opinion

12.2 Lord Krishna said: Those, who by fixing their mind on Me eternally, and those who are steadfast in worshipping Me with supreme faith, I consider them to be perfect in Yoga, ready to be united with Me.

ye tvakṣaram anirdeśyam avyaktaṁ paryupāsate |
sarvatragam acintyaṁ ca kūṭastham acalaṁ dhruvam || 12.3

ye: those; *tu*: but; *akṣaram*: imperishable; *anirdeśyam*: indefinable; *avyaktaṁ*: unmanifest; *paryupāsate*: worship; *sarvatragam*: all pervading; *acintyaṁ*: inconceivable; *ca*: also; *kūṭastham*: unchanging; *achalaṁ*: immovable; *dhruvam*: fixed

sanniyamyendriyagrāmaṁ sarvatra samabuddhayaḥ |
te prāpnuvanti mām eva sarvabhūta hite ratāḥ || 12.4

sanniyamya: restrained; *indriyagrāmaṁ*: all the senses; *sarvatra*: everywhere; *samabuddhayaḥ*: equally disposed; *te*: they; *prāpnuvanti*: achieve; *mām*: Me; *eva*: only; *sarvabhūta hite*: for the welfare of all living beings; *ratāḥ*: engaged

12.3,4 But those who worship with awareness the imperishable, the unmanifest, that which lies beyond the perception of senses, the all pervading, inconceivable, unchanging, the non-moving and permanent, those who worship by restraining their senses, and are working with even mind for the benefit of mankind, they too attain Me.

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kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām avyaktāsakta cetasām |
avyaktā hi gatiḥ duḥkhaṁ dehavadbhir avāpyate || 12.5

kleśaḥ: trouble; *adhikatarah*: greater; *teṣām*: of those; *avyaktāsakta cetasām*: whose minds are set on the unmanifest; *avyaktā*: unmanifest; *hi*: for; *gatiḥ*: goal; *duḥkhaṁ*: sorrow; *dehavadbhiḥ*: for the embodied; *avāpyate*: is attained

12.5 For those whose minds are set on the unmanifest, the formless, it is more difficult to advance; attaining the formless unmanifest is difficult for the embodied.

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ye tu sarvāṇi karmāṇi mayi saṁnyasya matparāḥ |
ananyenai 'va yogena mām dhyāyanta upāsate || 12.6

ye: who; *tu*: but; *sarvāṇi*: all; *karmāṇi*: actions; *mayi*: in me; *saṁnyasya*: renouncing; *matparāḥ*: regarding me as the supreme goal; *ananyena*: focussed; *eva*: even; *yogena*: with yoga; *mām*: me; *dhyāyantaḥ*: meditating; *upāsate*: worship

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teṣām ahaṁ samuddhartā mṛtyu saṁsāra sāgarāt |
bhavāmi na cirāt pārtha mayi āveśita cetasām || 12.7

teṣām: for them; *ahaṁ*: I; *samuddhartā*: the savior; *mṛtyu saṁsāra sāgarāt*: from the ocean of life and death cycle; *bhavāmi*: become; *na cirāt*: before long; *pārtha*: Arjuna; *mayi*: in me; *āveśita cetasām*: of those whose minds are set

12.6,7 But those who worship me with single minded devotion, renouncing all activities unto Me, regarding Me as their supreme goal, whose minds are set in Me, I shall deliver them soon from their ocean of the birth and death cycle.

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mayy eva mana ādhatsva mayi buddhiṁ niveśaya |
nivasīṣyasi mayy eva ata ūrdhvaṁ na saṁśayaḥ || 12.8

mayi: upon Me; eva: only; manaḥ: mind; ādhatsva: fix; mayi: upon Me; buddhiṁ: mind; niveśaya: apply; nivasīṣyasi: you will live; mayi: in Me; eva: alone; ata ūrdhvaṁ: thereafter; na: no; saṁśayaḥ: doubt

12.8 You fix your mind on Me alone, establish your mind in Me. You will live in Me always. There is no doubt in it.

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atha cittam samādhātum na śaknoṣi mayi sthiram |
abhyāsa yogena tato mām icchā 'ptum dhanañjaya || 12.9

atha: if; cittam: mind; samādhātum: to fix; na: not; śaknoṣi: you are able; mayi: upon Me; sthiram: steadily; abhyāsa yogena: by the practice of yoga; tataḥ: then; mām: Me; iccha: desire; āptum: to get; dhanañjaya: Arjuna

12.9 If you are not able to fix your mind upon Me then Arjuna, with the constant practice of Yoga, you try to attain Me.

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XW{n H\$ _mŴ Hſdſg(Ō_dnſn` {g && 10

abhyāse 'py asamarthaḥ 'si matkarmaparamo bhava |
mad artham api karmāṇi kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi || 12.10

abhyāse: in practice; api: even if; asamarthaḥ: unable; asi: you are; matkarma: My work; paramaḥ: dedicated to; bhava: become; mad artham: for Me; api: even; karmāṇi: work; kurvan: performing; siddhim: perfection; avāpsyasi: you will achieve

12.10 If you are not able to practice even this yoga then performing your duties and surrendering all your actions to Me, you will attain perfection.

athai tad apy aśakto 'si kartuṁ madyogam āśritaḥ |
sarva karma phala tyāgaṁ tataḥ kuru yatātmavān || 12.11

atha: even though; etad: this; api: also; aśaktaḥ: unable; asi: you are; kartuṁ: to perform; madyogam: My yoga; āśritaḥ: taking refuge in; sarva karma: of all activities; phala: of the results; tyāgaṁ: renunciation; tataḥ: then; kuru: do; yatātmavān: self controlled.

12.11 If you are not able to work even this way, surrendering unto Me, give up all the results of your actions to Me without ego.

śreyo hi jñānam abhyāsāt jñānād dhyānam viśiṣyate |
dhyānāt karmaphala tyāgas tyāgāc chāntir anantaram || 12.12

śreyo: better; hi: indeed; jñānam: knowledge; abhyāsāt: than practice; jñānād: than knowledge; dhyānam: meditation; viśiṣyate: superior; dhyānāt: than meditation; karmaphala tyāgaḥ: renunciation of the fruits of action; tyāgāt: by such renunciation; śāntiḥ: peace; anantaram: thereafter

12.12 Knowledge is better than mere practice. Meditation is superior to knowledge. Renunciating the fruit of actions is better than meditation. After renunciation of fruits of actions, one immediately attains peace.

Adveṣṭā sarva bhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca |
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adveṣṭā sarva bhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva ca |
nirmamo nirahankāraḥ samaduḥkhasukhaḥ kṣamī || 12.13

adveṣṭā: non envious; sarva bhūtānām: toward all living entities; maitraḥ: friendly; karuṇa: kindly; eva: certainly; ca: also; nirmamaḥ: with no sense of proprietorship; nirahankāraḥ: without false ego; sama: equal; duḥkha: in distress; sukhaḥ: and happiness; kṣamī: forgiving.

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santuṣṭaḥ satataṁ yogī yatātmā dṛḍhaniścayaḥ |
mayyarpita manobuddhir yo madbhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ || 12.14

santuṣṭaḥ: satisfied; satataṁ: always; yogī: one engaged in yoga; yatātmā: self controlled; dṛḍhaniścayaḥ: with determination; mayi: upon Me; arpita: engaged; manaḥ: mind; buddhiḥ: and intelligence; yaḥ: one who; madbhaktaḥ: My devotee; saḥ: he; me: to Me; priyaḥ: dear.

12.13,14 One who has no dislike or envy for any being, who is friendly and compassionate to everyone, free from the sense of I and mine, the ego, maintains equanimity of mind both in joy and sorrow, forgiving, ever satisfied, united with Yoga, has a strong commitment to Me and has fixed his mind and intellect upon Me, such a devotee of Mine is very dear to Me.

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yasmān no 'dvijate loko lokān no 'dvijate ca yaḥ |
harṣāmarṣabhayodvegair mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ || 12.15

yasmāt: from whom; na: not; udvijate: is agitated; lokaḥ: the world; lokāt: from the world; na: not; udvijate: is agitated; ca: and; yaḥ: who; harṣāmarṣabhayodvegaiḥ: from joy; envy; fear and anxiety; muktaḥ: freed; yaḥ: who; sa: he; ca: and; me: to me; priyaḥ: dear

12.15 He, by whom the world is not affected adversely, and who in turn does not affect the world adversely, and he, who is free from joy, anger, and anxiety, he is dear to Me.

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anapekṣaḥ śucir dakṣaḥ udāsīno gatavyathaḥ |
sarvārambha parityāgī yo madbhaktaḥ sa me priyaḥ || 12.16

anapekṣaḥ: free from expectations; śuciḥ: pure; dakṣa: expert; udāsīnaḥ: unconcerned; gatavyathaḥ: untroubled; sarvārambha parityāgī: renouncing all undertakings; yo: who; madbhaktaḥ: my devotee; saḥ: he; me: to me; priyaḥ: dear

12.16 He, who is free from wants, who is pure and skilled, unconcerned, untroubled, who is selfless in whatever he does, he who is devoted to Me, he is dear to Me.

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e f m e w n [a ḥ ḥ m j r ^ { ḥ _ n ḥ : g _ o { à ḥ : 17

yaḥ na hr̥ṣyati na dveṣṭi na śocati na kāṅkṣati |
subhāśubha parityāgi bhaktimān yaḥ sa me priyaḥ || 12.17

yaḥ: who; *na*: not; *hṛṣyati*: rejoices; *na*: not; *dveṣṭi*: hates; *na*: not; *śocati*: grieves; *na*: not; *kāṅkṣati*: desires; *subhāśubha parityāgī*: renouncing good and evil; *bhaktimān*: full of devotion; *yaḥ*: who; *sa*: he; *me*: to me; *priyaḥ*: dear

12.17 *He who does not rejoice or hate or grieve or desire, renounces both good and evil and who is full of devotion, he is dear to Me.*

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samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca tathā mānāpamānayoḥ |
śītoṣṇa sukha duḥkheṣu samaḥ saṅgavivarjitaḥ || 12.18

samaḥ: equal; *śatrau*: to an enemy; *ca*: also; *mitre*: to a friend; *ca*: also; *tathā*: so; *māna*: in honor; *apamānayoḥ*: and dishonour; *śīta*: in cold; *uṣṇa*: heat; *sukha*: happiness; *duḥkheṣu*: and sorrow; *samaḥ*: same; *saṅgavivarjitaḥ*: free from all association

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A{ZH&V: pñWa_{V^&\$_m_y_o{ā`noZa:Ÿ && 19

tulya nindā stutir maunī santuṣṭo yena kenacit |
aniketaḥ sthiramatir bhaktimān me priyo naraḥ || 12.19

tulya: equal; *nindā*: in defamation; *stutiḥ*: and reputē; *maunī*: silent; *santuṣṭaḥ*: satisfied; *yena kenacit*: with anything; *aniketaḥ*: having no residence; *sthira*: fixed; *matiḥ*: mind; *bhaktimān*: engaged in devotion; *me*: to Me; *priyaḥ*: dear; *naraḥ*: a man

12.18,19 *One who treats friends and enemies the same, who faces in the same manner honor and dishonor, heat and cold, happiness and sorrow, fame and infamy, one who is always free from attachment, always silent and satisfied with anything, without a fixed home, who is fixed in mind and who is devoted to Me, such a person is very dear to Me.*

oVwYā`mP{X\$`WnPS`n`mgVā
I ŌYmZm_Ēna_m^o\$nmVrd_o{ā`m 20

ye tu dharmyāmṛtam idaṁ yathoktaṁ paryupāsate |
śraddadhānā matparamā bhaktās te 'tīva me priyāḥ || 12.20

ye: who; tu: indeed; dharmya: righteous path; amṛtam: nectar; idaṁ: this; yathā: as; uktaṁ: said; paryupāsate: follow; śraddadhānā: with faith; matparamā: taking Me as the Supreme Lord; bhaktāḥ: devotees; te: they; atīva: very much; me: to Me; priyāḥ: dear

12.20 Those who truly follow this imperishable path of righteousness with great faith, making Me the supreme goal, are very dear to Me.

B{V I r_ØJdØrVngn(ZfEgw~«{dŪm`n\$`mlemóo
I rH\$UOnOg\$inKo^{°\$`m/nmZm_ ŪnKe@Ū`m: V&

iti śrīmad bhagavadgītāsūpaniṣatsu brahmavidyāyām yogaśāstre
śrī kṛṣṇārjuna saṁvāde bhaktiyogo nāma dvādaśo 'dhyāyaḥ ||

In the Upaniṣad of the Bhagavad gita, the knowledge of Brahman, the Supreme, the science of Yoga and the dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna, this is the twelfth discourse designated:

Bhakti Yogaḥ

Appendix





Scientific Research on Bhagavad Gita

Several institutions have conducted experiments using scientific and statistically supported techniques to verify the truth behind Bhagavad Gita. Notable amongst them is the work carried out by Maharishi Mahesh yogi, whose findings are published through Maharishi Ved Vigyan Vishwa Vidyapeetam.

Studies conducted using meditation techniques related to truths expressed in the verses of Bhagavad Gita have shown that the quality of life is significantly improved through meditation. These studies have found that meditators experience a greater sense of peace resulting in a reduced tendency towards conflict.

Meditators gain greater respect for and appreciation of others. Their own inner fulfilment increases resulting in improved self-respect and self-reliance, leading to Self Actualization.

One's ability to focus along with brain function integration is enhanced. These have resulted in greater comprehension, creativity, faster response time in decision-making and superior psychomotor coordination.

Stress levels have been shown to decrease with enhanced sensory perception and overall health. The tendency towards depression has been clearly shown to decrease.

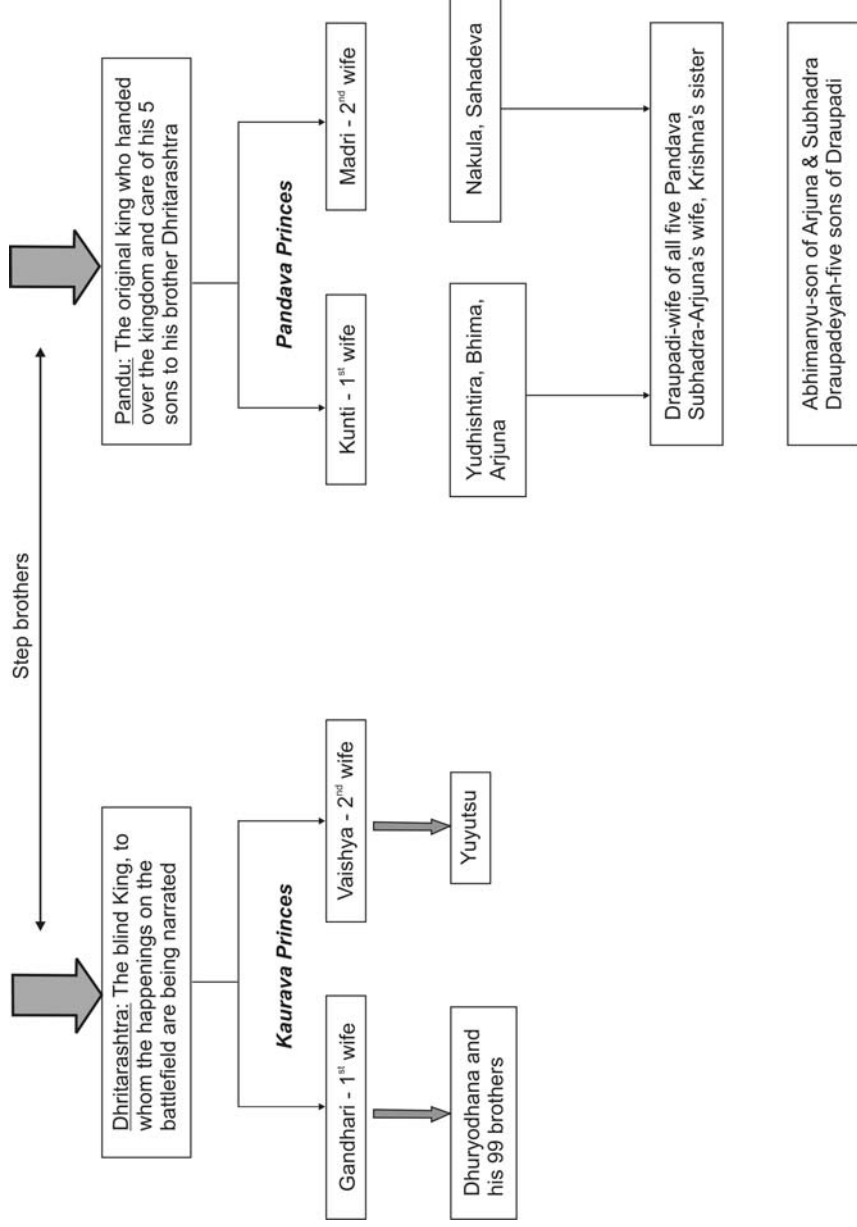
There is enough evidence to show that as a result of meditation, individuals gain a better ethical lifestyle that in turn improves their interaction with others in the community, resulting in less conflict and crime. Group meditation of 7000 people (square root of 1% of world population at the time of the study) was significantly correlated to a reduction in conflict worldwide.

Meditation leads to higher levels of consciousness. Through the research tools of Applied Kinesiology, Dr. David Hawkins (author of the book *Power vs. Force*) and others have shown that human consciousness has risen in the last few decades, crossing a critical milestone for the first time in human history. Dr. Hawkins'

research also documents that Bhagavad Gita is at the very highest level of Truth conveyed to humanity.

We acknowledge with gratitude the work done by the Maharishi Mahesh yogi institutions and Dr. David Hawkins in establishing the truth of this great scripture.

Kuru Family Tree





Key Characters in Bhagavad Gita

Pandavas' side:

Krishna	: god Incarnate; related to both Kaurava and Pandava; Arjuna's charioteer in the war
Drupada	: A great warrior and father of Draupadi
Drishtadyumna	: The son of king Drupada
Shikhandi	: A mighty archer and a transsexual person
Virata	: Abhimanyu's father-in-law; king of a neighboring kingdom
Yuyudhana	: Krishna's charioteer and a great warrior
Kashiraj	: King of the neighboring kingdom of Kashi
Chekitan	: A great warrior
Kuntibhoj	: Adoptive father of Kunti, the mother of the first three Pandava princes
Purujit	: Brother of Kuntibhoj
Shaibhya	: Leader of the Shibi tribe
Drishtaketu	: king of Chedis
Uttamouja	: A great warrior

Kaurava's Side:

Sanjay	: Minister and narrator of events to Dritarashtra
Bhishma	: Great grandfather of the Kaurava & Pandava; great warrior
Drona	: A great archer and teacher of both Kauravas and Arjuna

Vikarna	: Third of the Kaurava brothers
Karna	: Pandavas' half brother, born to Kunti before her marriage
Ashvatthama	: Drona's son and Achilles heel; said to always speak the truth
Kripacharya	: Teacher of martial arts to both Kaurava and Pandava
Shalya	: king of neighboring kingdom and brother of Madri, Nakula and Sahadeva's mother
Soumadatti	: king of Bahikas
Dusshassana	: One of Kaurava brothers; responsible for insulting Draupadi



Glossary

Ābharāṇa: adornment; *vastrābharāṇa* is adornment with clothes

Abhyāsa: exercise; practice

Ācārya: teacher; literally 'one who walks with'

Advaita: concept of non-duality; that individual self and the cosmic SELF are one and the same; as different from the concepts of *dvaita* and *viśiṣṭādvaita*, which consider self and SELF to be mutually exclusive

Āhāra: food; also with reference to sensory inputs as in *pratyāhāra*

Ājñā: order, command; the third eye energy centre

Ākāśa: space, sky; subtlest form of energy of universe

Amṛta, *amṛt*: divine nectar whose consumption leads to immortality

Anāhata: that which is not created; heart energy centre

Ānanda: bliss; very often used to refer to joy, happiness etc.

Angulimaal: a highway robber and murderer who wore a garland with the fingers of his victims. He was later transformed by Buddha and became a monk in Buddha's monastery

Añjana: collyrium, black pigment used to paint the eye lashes

Annamalai Swamigal: enlightened disciple and personal assistant of enlightened master Bhagavan Ramana Maharshi.

Āpas: water

Ārati: worship of the deity using lit lamps

Ārti: worshipping with a flame or light, as with a lamp lit with oiled wick, or burning camphor

Ashtavakra: An enlightened sage of ancient India, authored *Ashtavakra Samhita*

Āśīrvād: blessing

Ashtanga Yoga: Eight fold path to enlightenment prescribed by Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutra*

Āśraya: grounded in reality; *aśraya doṣa*: defect related to reality

Ātma, *ātman*: individual Self; part of the universal *Brahman*

Atma Shatakam: Poem of six stanzas composed by enlightened master Adi Sankara , summarizing the concept of *Advaita* or Non-dualistic philosophy

Aurangzeb: one of the last Mughal emperors; greatest of all the Mughal emperors who ruled India; a despotic ruler

Beedi: local Indian cigarette

Bīja: seed; *bīja-mantra* refers to the single syllable *mantras* used to invoke certain deities

Bhagavān: literally god; often used for an enlightened Master

Bhāvana: visualization

Brahma: The God of creation in the Hindu Trinity of *Brahma* (Creator), *Viṣṇu* (Preserver) and *Śiva* (Rejuvenator)

Bhakti: devotion; *bhakta*, a devotee

Bhagavatam: Devotional stories on Lord Krishna, compiled by Veda Vyasa.

Big Bang: One of the cosmological models of the Universe; proposed by Georges Lemaitre, a Roman Catholic priest

Brahma: the Creator; one of the Hindu trinity of supreme gods, the other two being *Vishnu* and *Shiva*

Brahmacāri: literally one who moves with the true reality, *Brahman*, one without fantasies, but usually taken to mean a celibate; *brahmacarya* is the quality or state of being a *brahmacāri*

Brahman: ultimate reality of the Divine, universal intelligent energy

Brāhmaṇa: person belonging to the class engaged in *Vedic* studies, priestly class

Buddhi: mind, intelligence; mind is also called by other names, *manas*, *citta* etc.

Buddhu: a fool

Buddha: Enlightened master who preached of the 'eight fold path' to achieve 'nirvāṇa' or salvation.

Cakra: literally a 'wheel'; refers to energy centres in the mind-body system

Cakṣu: eye, intelligent power behind senses

Candāla: an untouchable; usually one who skins animals.

Chandana: sandalwood

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: An enlightened sage from West Bengal, believed to be an incarnation of Lord Krishna

Chitragupta: a character in the Hindu mythology who keeps account of the events in one's life to reveal at the time of person's death.

Citta: mind; also *manas*, *buddhi*.

Dakṣiṇāyana: Sun's southward movement starting 21st June

Darśan: vision; usually referred to seeing divinity

Dharma: righteousness

Dhee: wisdom.

Dikṣa: grace bestowed by the master and the energy transferred by the master to the disciple at initiation or any other time, may be through a *mantra*, a touch, a glance or even a thought

Doṣa: defect

Dhyāna: meditation

Dr. Brian Weiss: a Psychotherapist, famous for his book, 'Many Lives, Many Masters.'

Dr̥ṣṭi: sight, seeing with mental eye

Gada: weapon similar to a mace; also *gadadhāyudha*

Gāṇḍīva: Divine bow presented to Arjuna by Agni, god of Fire, in the epic Mahabharata

Gopī, *gopikās*: literally a cowherdess; usually referred to the devotees who played with Krishna, and were lost in Him

Gopura, *gopuram*: temple tower

Govindapada: Adi Sankara's master of enlightened master Adi Sankara

Gṛhastā: a householder, a married person; coming from the word *griha*, meaning house

Guṇa: the three human behavioral characteristics or predispositions; *satva*, *rajas* and *tamas*

Guru: Master; literally one who leads from *gu* (darkness) to *ru* (light)

Gurukul, *Gurukulam*: literally ‘tradition of *guru*’, refers to the ancient education system in which children were handed over to a *guru* at a very young age by parents for upbringing and education

Hammurabhi: Ancient king of Mesopotamia, known for his Hammurabhi’s code, one of the first written books on codes of Law

Homa: ritual to *Agni*, the god of fire; metaphorically represents the transfer of energy from the energy of *Ākāśa* (space), through *Vāyu* (Air), *Agni* (Fire), *Āpas* (Water), and *Prthvī* (Earth) to humans. Also *yāga*, *yagna*

Icchā: desire

I Ching: one of the oldest of Chinese classical texts, describes Cosmology and philosophy

Idā: along with *pingala* and *suṣūmna*, the virtual energy pathway through which *pranic* energy flows

Itihāsa: legend, epic, mythological stories; also *purāṇa*

Jāti: birth; *jāti-doṣa*: defect related to birth

Jāgrata: wakefulness

Japa: literally ‘muttering’; continuous repetition of the name of divinity

Jīvasamādhi: burial place of an enlightened master, where his spirit lives on

jīva: means living

Jyotiṣa: Astrology; *jyotiṣi* is an astrologer

Kaivalya: liberation; same as *mokṣa*, *nirvāṇa*

Kāla: time; also *mahākāla*

Kalpa: vast period of time; *Yuga* is a fraction of *Kalpa*

Kalpanā: imagination

Karma: spiritual law of cause and effect, driven by *vāsana* and *samskāra*

King Janaka: a noble and benevolent king who ruled Mithila,, father of princess Sita in the epic *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Koan: Zen parables, an anecdote or riddle without any solution to show the inadequacy of logical reasoning

Kośa: energy layer surrounding body; there are 5 such layers. These are: *annamaya* or body, *prānamaya* or breath, *manomaya* or thoughts, *vignānamaya* or sleep and *ānandamaya* or bliss *kośas*

Kriyā: action

Kṣaṇa: moment in time; refers to time between two thoughts

Kṣatriya: caste or *varṇa* of warriors

Kumbh Mela: Large spiritual gathering in India that occurs four times every twelve years, attracting millions of people. The four locations of Kumbh Mela are Prayag in Allahabad at the confluence of Ganga, Yamuna and the underground Saraswati river; Haridwar on the banks of Ganga; Ujjain along the Kshipra river and Nasik along Godavari.

Kusha grass: Sacred grass used in the Vedic tradition for various religious ceremonies. The seat made of kusha grass and covered with a skin and a cloth is considered ideal for meditation.

Kuṇḍalini: energy that resides at the root chakra '*mūlādhāra*'

Lao Tzu: enlightened master and father of Taoism ancient Chinese philosopher, referred as 'One of the Three Pure Ones.'

Mahā: great; as in *mahaṛṣi*, great sage; *mahāvākya*, great scriptural saying

Mālā: a garland, a necklace; *rudrākṣamālā* is a garland made of the seeds of the *rudrākṣa* tree

Mālā: garland

Manana: thinking, meditation

Manas: mind; also *buddhi*, *citta*

Mandir: temple

Maṅgala: auspicious; *maṅgala sūtra*, literally auspicious thread, the yellow or gold thread or necklace a married Hindu woman wears

Mantra: a sound, a formula; sometimes a word or a set of words, which because of their inherent sounds, have energizing properties. *Mantras* are used as sacred chants to worship the Divine; *mantra*, *tantra* and *yantra* are approaches in spiritual evolution

Manickkavasagchakar: One of the main Nayanmars or Tamil Saivite saints poet., He compiled 'Thiruivasagam', a collection of hymns in praise of Lord Sshiva.

Māyā: that which is not, not reality, illusion; all life is *māyā* according to *advaita*

Mimamsa: a system of ancient Indian philosophy

Mokṣa: liberation; same as *nirvāṇa*, *samādhi*, *turīya* etc.

Mūlādhāra: the first energy centre, *mūlā* is root; *ādhāra* is foundation, here existence

Nachiketa: lead character in Kathopanishad, believed to have learnt the secret of death from Lord Yama (god of death) himself.

Nadi: river

Nāḍi: nerve; also an energy pathway that is not physical

Nāga: a snake; a *nāga-sādhu* is an ascetic belonging to a group that wears no clothes

Namaskār: traditional greeting with raised hands, with palms brought together

Nānta: without end

Nārī: woman

Nataraja: a depiction of Lord Śiva as the cosmic dancer, main deity in the famous temple at Chidambaram

Nididhyāsana: what is expressed

Nimitta: reason; *nimitta-doṣa*, defect based on reason

Nirvāṇa: liberation; same as *mokṣa*, *samādhi*

Nisargadatta Maharaj: An enlightened master who lived in Mumbai. Passed away on 8th September 1981, at the age of 84.

Niyama: the second of eight paths of Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga; refers to a number of day-to-day rules of observance for a spiritual path

Pāpa: sin

Paramahansa Yogananda: an enlightened master, advocated practice of Kriya Yoga to attain Self-realization.

Patanjali: Father of Yoga, famous for his treatise on yoga called Patanjali's Yoga Sutras

Prakashananda Saraswati: a Rasik saint in the tradition of Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, his teachings are mainly based on the Bhagavad Gita.

Phala: fruit; *phalasruti* refers to the assumed benefits of worship

Paramahansa: literally the 'supreme swan'; refers to an enlightened being

Parikrama: the ritual of going around a holy location, such as a hill or water spot

Parivrājaka: wandering by an ascetic monk

Piṅgala: please see *idā*

Prāṇa: life energy; also refers to breath; *prāṇāyāma* is control of breath

Pratyāhāra: literally 'staying away from food'; in this case refers to control of all senses as part of the eight fold Ashtanga Yoga

Ṛthvī: earth energy

Purohit: priest

Pūjā: Form of ritual worship

Puṇya: merit, beneficence

Purāṇa: epics and mythological stories such as *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana* etc.

Pūrṇa: literally 'complete'; refers in the *advaita* context to reality

Rajas, rajasic: the second characteristic of the three human *guṇa* or behaviour modes, referring to passionate action

Putra: son; *putrī*: daughter

Rakta: blood

Rāmāyaṇa: Famous Indian epic, authored by *Valmiki*

Rātrī: night

Ramkarishna Paramahansa: An enlightenend master from Dakshineshwar, West Bengal, India.

Ramana Maharshi: an enlightened master from Tiruvannamalai; composed 'Aksharamanamalai', the famous hymn on Arunachala hill

Ravana: Mighty emperor of Lanka, the villain in *Ramayana*, who abducted princess Sita in the Indian historical epic *Ramayana*.

Rene Descartes: French philosopher and mathematician, Father of Modern philosophy

Ṛṣi: a sage

Sādhana: practice, usually a spiritual practice

Sādhu: literally a 'good person'; refers to an ascetic; same as *sanyāsi*

Sahasranāma 1000 names invoking a particular deity which devotees recite

Sahasrāra: lotus with thousand petals; the crown energy centre

Śakti: energy; intelligent energy; *Parāśakti* refers to universal energy, divinity; considered feminine; masculine aspect of Shakthi is Shiva

Samādhi: state of no-mind, no-thoughts; literally, becoming one's original state; liberated, enlightened state.

Samśaya: doubt

Samskāra: embedded memories of unfulfilled desires stored in the subconscious that drive one into decisions, into *karmic* action

Samyama: complete concentration

Sankalpa: decision

Sāṅkhya philosophy: One of the six schools of classical a system of orthodox Indian philosophy. *Sāṅkhya* philosophy regards the universe as consisting of two realities: *puruṣa* (self) and *prakṛti* (matter).

Sanyās: giving up worldly life; *sanyāsi* or *sanyāsin*, a monk, an ascetic

Sanyāsinī, refers to a female monk

Śāstra: sacred texts

Satva, *satvic*: the highest *guṇa* of spiritual calmness

Siddhi: extraordinary powers attained through spiritual practice

Shankara: an enlightened master from Kalady, Kerala. Exponent of *Advaita vedānta*

Śiṣya: disciple

Simha: lion; *Simha svapna*: nightmare

Śiva: rejuvenator in the trinity; often spelt as *Siva*. *Śiva* also means 'causeless auspiciousness'.

Smarana: remembrance; constantly remembering the Divine

Smṛti: literally 'that which is remembered'; refers to later day Hindu works which are rules, regulations, laws and epics, such as Manu's works, *Purāṇas* etc.

Śraddhā: trust, faith, belief, confidence

Śravaṇa: hearing

Sṛṣṭi: creation, which is created

Śruti: literally 'that which is heard'; refers to the ancient scriptures of *Vedas*, *Upaniṣads* and Bhagavad Gita; considered to be revealed scriptures

Stotras: devotional verses, to be recited or sung

Śūdra: caste or *varṇa* of manual labourers

Sumerian civilization: an ancient civilization that existed in the Mesopotamia till the 2nd millennium BC

Sūtra: literally 'thread'; refers to epigrams, short verses which impart spiritual techniques

Śūnya: literally zero; however, Buddha uses this word to mean reality

Suṣuṃna: Please see 'ida'

Svādiṣṭhāna: where Self is established; the groin or spleen energy centre

Svapna: dream

Svatantra: free

Tamas, *tamasic*: the *guṇa* of laziness or inaction

Tantra: esoteric techniques used in spiritual evolution

Tapas: severe spiritual endeavour, penance

Thatagata: Buddhahood, a pali word

Tīrtha: water; *tīrthaṃ* is a holy river and a pilgrimage centre

Trikāla: all three time zones, past, present and future; *trikālajñāni* is one who can see all three at the same time; an enlightened being is beyond time and space

Turīya: state of *samādhi*, no-mind

Upaniṣad: literally 'sitting with an enlightenend master'

Uttarāyaṇa: Sun's northward movement

Vaiśya: caste or *varṇa* of tradesmen

Valmiki: author of the famous epic, *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Vānaprastha: the third stage in one's life, (the first stage being that of a student, and the second that of householder) when a householder, man or woman, gives up worldly activities and focuses on spiritual goals

Varṇa: literally colour; refers to the caste grouping in the traditional Hindu social system; originally based on aptitude, and later corrupted to privilege of birth

Vāsana: the subtle essence of memories and desires, *saṁskāra*, that get carried forward from birth to birth

Vastra: clothes

Vastrābharāṇa: removal of clothes, often used to refer to Draupadi's predicament in the Mahabharata, when she was attempted to be disrobed.

Vāyu: Air

Veda: literally knowledge; refers to ancient Hindu scriptures, believed to have been received by enlightened ṛṣi at the being level; also called *śruti*, along with *Upaniṣad*

Vibhūti : sacred ash worn by many Hindus on forehead; said to remind themselves of the transient nature of life; of glories too

Vidhi: literally law, natural law; interpreted as fate or destiny

Vidyā: knowledge, education

Viśāda: depression, dilemma etc.

Viṣṇu: The Preserver in the trinity; His incarnations include Krishna, Rama etc. in ten incarnations; also means 'all encompassing'

Viśvarūpa: universal form

Vivekananda: An enlightened monk from West Bengal, India; was also Ramakrishna Paramahansa's leading disciple

Yama: discipline as well as death; One of the eight fold paths prescribed in Patanjali's Ashtanga Yoga; refers to spiritual regulations of *satya* (truth), *ahimsā* (non violence), *aparigraha* (living simply); *asteya* (not coveting others' properties) and *brahmacarya* (giving up fantasies); *yama* is also the name of the Hindu god of justice and death

Yantra: literally 'tool'; usually a mystical and powerful graphic diagram, such as the *Śrīcakra*, inscribed on a copper plate, and sanctified in a ritual blessed by a divine presence or an enlightened Master

Yoga: literally union, union of the individual self and the divine SELF; often taken to mean *Haṭha yoga*, which is one of the components of *yogasana*, relating to specific body postures

Yuga: a period of time as defined in Hindu scriptures; there are four *yugas*: *satya*, *tretā*, *dvāpara* and *kali*, the present being *kali yuga*.

Zarathustra: founder of the religion of Zoroastrianism followed by Parsis



Appendix

About Paramahansa Nithyananda

Paramahansa Nithyananda is an enlightened master living amidst us today. With a worldwide movement for meditation and inner bliss, Nithyananda offers solutions for situations as practical as every day stress to the quest for something as profound as enlightenment.

Nithyananda left home at a young age and traveled the length and breadth of India, visiting holy shrines, associating with several yogis and mystics during this period. He realized his intrinsic knowledge through the paths of meditation, yoga, knowledge, devotion, Tantra and other Eastern metaphysical sciences. With an enlightened insight into the core of human nature, Nithyananda has defined his mission for humanity at large.

Rooted in the *vedic* tradition and embracing all world religions as paths to the ultimate Truth, Nithyananda draws people from around the globe, crossing all societal, cultural, language, age and gender barriers.

Since its inception, **Nithyananda Dhyanapectam** in Bidadi, Bengaluru, India has been a spiritual center for devotees from all over the world. The organization renders innumerable services and programs. The worldwide ashrams and centers offer programs in Quantum Spirituality, where material and spiritual worlds merge to create blissful living.

The services provided by the organization include ■ meditation ■ yoga ■ corporate leadership programs ■ free energy healing through the *Nithya Spiritual Healing system* ■ free education to youth ■ promoting art and culture ■ *satsangs* (spiritual gatherings) ■ free medical camps and eye surgeries ■ free meals at all ashrams worldwide ■ a holistic system of education for children through the ashram *gurukul* ■ a one-year residential spiritual training program in India and more. The **Life**



Bliss Foundation, located in Los Angeles, USA spreads the powerful teachings and meditations cognized by Nithyananda to centers in North America, Europe and other parts of the world.

Nithyananda says, “Enlightenment flowers when individual consciousness disappears into Universal Consciousness. When you start living enlightenment, you automatically raise the human consciousness around you. Living enlightenment holds the key to global peace and inner bliss. Every individual should be a pioneer in the transition of human consciousness to Divine Consciousness.”

Programs and Workshops

Nithyananda Mission offers specialized meditation programs worldwide, to benefit millions of people at the levels of body, mind and spirit. A few of them are listed below:

Inner Awakening

An enlightenment intensive program for sincere seekers offering yoga, powerful teachings, meditation, initiation and more. This program is an intense experience to prepare the body-mind system to hold and radiate the experience of ‘living enlightenment’.

Life Bliss Engineering

Life Bliss Engineering program is an intense 3-month program with Nithyananda in the energy field of the Bengaluru ashram. It aims at awakening every participant to Living Enlightenment. It trains them to imbibe a vedic mind and a yogic body. It offers:

- Long-hour sessions in the presence of the master
- Powerful talks from the master
- Eye opening Question and Answer sessions directly with the master
- Specially designed meditation techniques in the presence of the master
- A vedic lifestyle with hands-on exposure to vedic culture and arts
- Short trips with the master to powerful temples of India and much more...

Life Bliss Program Level 1 (LBP Level 1)

- *Energize yourself*

A *chakra* based meditation program that relaxes and energizes the seven major *chakras* or subtle energy centers in your system. It gives clear intellectual and experiential understanding of your various emotions such as greed, fear, worry, attention-need, stress, jealousy, ego, and discontentment. It is designed to create a spiritual effect at the physical level. It is a guaranteed life solution to experience the reality of your own bliss. When you are liberated from a particular emotion, you experience a new world, a new energy. It is a highly effective workshop, experienced by millions of people around the globe.



Life Bliss Program Level 2 (LBP Level 2)

- *Death demystified!*

A meditation program that unleashes the art of living by demystifying the process of dying. This program creates the space to detach from ingrained and unconscious emotions like guilt, pleasure and pain, all of which stem from the ultimate fear of death. It is a gateway to a new life that is driven by natural intelligence and spontaneous enthusiasm

Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Atma Spurana Program (LBP Level 3 - ATSP)

- *Connect with your Self!*

An indepth program that analyzes clearly the workings of the mind and shows you experientially how to be the master of the mind rather than be dictated by it. It imparts tremendous intellectual understanding coupled with powerful meditations to produce instant clarity and integration.

Life Bliss Program Level 3 - Bhakti Spurana Program (LBP Level 3 - BSP)

- *Integrate your Devotion*

A program that reveals the different dimensions of relating with others and with your deeper self. It clearly defines relationship as that which kindles and reveals your own unknown dimensions to you. It allows you to experience the real depth and joy of any relationship in your life.

Life Bliss Technology (LBT)

- *A free residential life sciences program*

Life Bliss Technology (LBT) is a residential program for youth between 18 and 30 years of age. With its roots in the Eastern system of *vedic* education, this program is designed to empower modern youth with good physical, mental and emotional health and practical life skills. By nurturing creative intelligence and spontaneity, and imparting life skills, it creates economically self-sufficient and spiritually fulfilled youth. Above all, it offers a lifetime opportunity to live and learn under the tutelage of an enlightened master.



Nithyanandam

An advanced meditation program for seekers where the presence of the Master and the intense energy field lead one to the state of *nithya ananda* – eternal bliss. It offers a range of techniques from meditation to service to sitting in the powerful presence of the master.

Kalpataru

An experiential meditation program sowing in you the seed of:

Shakti, the Energy to understand and change whatever you need to change in life,

Buddhi, the Intelligence to understand and accept whatever you don't need to change in life,

Yukti, the Clarity to understand and realize that however much you change, whatever you see as reality is itself a continuously changing dream,

Bhakti, the Devotion, the feeling of deep connection to That which is unchanging, eternal and Ultimate, and

Mukti, the Ultimate Liberation into Living Enlightenment when all these four are integrated.

This program empowers you with the energy to align your actions with your intentions so you move with success and inner bliss.

Nithyananda Mission Highlights

- **Meditation and de-addiction camps worldwide:** Over 2 million people impacted to date

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- **Nithya Spiritual Healing:** A system of cosmic energy healing administered free through 5000 ordained healers, through our worldwide ashrams and centers, touching 20,000 people globally every day – healing both mind and body
 - **Anna Daan (free food program):** 10,000 nutritious meals distributed every week through all the ashram *anna mandirs* for visitors, devotees and disciples thus improving health standards
 - **The Nithyananda Order and its training:** Spiritual aspirants ordained as *Sannyasis*, *Brahmacharis* and *Brahmacharinis*: who undergo years of intensive training in yoga, meditation, deep spiritual practice, Sanskrit, *vedic* chanting, life skills, and who run the 100% volunteer based ashrams of Nithyananda Mission worldwide, working in all Mission activities
 - **Nithya Yoga:** A revolutionary system of yoga in the lines of sage Patanjali's original teachings, taught worldwide.
 - **Nithyananda Vedic Temples and Ashrams:** Over 30 Vedic temples and ashrams worldwide.
 - **Meditation Programs in prisons:** Conducted in prisons and juvenile camps to reform extremist attitudes – resulting in amazing transformation among the inmates.
 - **Medical Camps:** Free treatment and therapies in allopathy, homeopathy, ayurveda, acupuncture, eye check-ups, eye surgeries, artificial limb donation camps, gynecology and more
 - **Support to children in rural areas:** School buildings, school uniforms and educational materials provided free to rural schools.
 - **Life Bliss Technology:** A free two year / three month program for youth teaching Life Engineering and the science of enlightenment
 - **Nithyananda Gurukul:** A modern scientific approach to education combined with the *vedic* system of learning – protecting and developing the innate intelligence of the child who flowers without repression, fear or peer pressure
 - **Corporate Meditation Programs:** Specially designed and conducted in corporate firms



worldwide including Microsoft, AT&T, Qualcomm, JP Morgan, Petrobras, Pepsi, Oracle, American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) – with focus on intuitive management, leadership skills and team work.

- **Nithyananda Institute of Teachers' Training:** Over 300 teachers trained to teach: transformational meditation programs, Quantum Memory Program, Nithya Yoga, Health and Healing Programs, Spiritual Practice Programs and more
- **Media:** Articles in national and international newspapers and magazines, carrying transforming messages from Nithyananda
- **Nithyananda Publishers:** Over 5000 hours of Paramahansa Nithyananda's discourses transcribed, edited and published in-house and made available in stores through books, DVDs and CDs
- **Life Bliss Galleries:** Worldwide stores and mobile shops retailing recordings and books of Nithyananda's discourses and Nithya Kirtan recordings in 23 languages
- **Nithyananda Meditation & Healing Centers:** Worldwide, offering meditation and healing services
- **Nithyananda Sangeeth Academy:** Music, dance and other forms of art taught and encouraged in youth and elderly alike - live and through internet
- **Free Discourses on YouTube:** Over 500 free discourses on www.youtube.com – wisdom from the Master, easily accessible. Ranked top in viewership
- **Support to scientists and researchers:** Continually bridging gaps between science and spirituality through researches on spiritual energy and healing.
- **Nithyananda Youth Foundation:** A collection of inspired youth, building a divine and dynamic society with a common ideology of peace and enlightenment
- **Nithya Dheera Seva Sena:** Through transformation of self, this volunteer force of *Ananda Sevaks* trains and functions in the service of humanity, also serving as relief wing working towards disaster recovery management.

Contact Us

Listed below are some of the main centers of Nithyananda Mission.

USA:

Los Angeles

Nithyananda Vedic Temple

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USA

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Email: programs@lifebliss.org, shop@lifebliss.org

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URL: www.mynithyananda.com

INDIA:

Bengaluru, Karnataka

(Spiritual headquarters and Nithyananda Vedic Temple)

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Karnataka, INDIA

Ph.: +91 +80 27202801 / +91 92430 48957

Email: mail@nithyananda.org

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*Sacred Banyan tree at the
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Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

Nithyananda Dhyanapectam

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Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh

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For further information visit www.nithyananda.org

Nithyananda Galleria

A wide range of products for blissful living:

- Nithyananda's insightful messages on video, audio tapes, CDs and books in over 26 languages.
- Enlivening music and chants for meditation and inner healing.



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- Meditation and yoga books, kits and CDs for rejuvenating body, mind and spirit.
 - Energized rosaries, bracelets, photographs, clothing and gift items for a stimulating life style.
 - Ethnic energy bead jewelry for men and women for tranquility and continued high energy.

Visit www.nithyanandagalleria.com or www.lifeblissgalleria.com for more information.
E-mail: nithyanandagalleria@gmail.com & shop@lifebliss.org

Suggested for Further Reading

- Living Enlightenment (Gospel of Paramahansa Nithyananda)
- Nithyananda Vol. 1
- Guaranteed Solutions
- Don't Worry Be Happy
- Instant Tools for Blissful Living
- You Can Heal
- Follow Me In!
- The Door to Enlightenment
- Songs of Eternity (A coffee table book with Nithyananda's messages and pictures)
- You are No Sinner
- So You Want to Know The Truth?
- Uncommon answers to Common Questions

Over 500 FREE discourses of Nithyananda available at <http://www.youtube.com/lifeblissfoundation>

VOL 2

CHAPTERS 7 - 12

BhagavadGita

demystified

by

NITHYANANDA

The Gita demystified in the language of here and now by an enlightened master of this millennium.

The Bhagavad Gita is Lord Krishna's gift to the world given several thousand years ago. In these three volumes, Paramahansa Nithyananda, enlightened master of this millennium, demystifies the Gita in the language of here and now. He explains it relevant to the modern man. He shows how it can lead to blissful living in today's world. He assures the sincere seeker, the Supreme Experience, described by Krishna.

